MW

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OSAMU TEZUKA

[CONTINUED FROM FRONT FLAP]

There are only two men with any hope of stopping him: one, a brilliant public prosecutor who struggles to build a case against the psychopath; the other, a tormented Catholic priest, Iwao Garai, who shares Yuki's past—and frequently his bed.

Serialized beginning in 1976 in *Big Comic* magazine, where Tezuka's trailblazing medical thriller *Ode to Kirihito* had appeared a few years earlier, *MW* probes the complexities of homoeroticism as well as the reality of extensive U.S. military presence in Japan. The result is as bracing today as it was thirty years ago.

OSAMU TEZUKA (1928–89) is the godfather of Japanese manga comics. He originally intended to become a doctor and earned his degree before turning to what was still then considered a frivolous medium. His many early masterpieces include the series known in the U.S. as *Astro Boy*. With his sweeping vision, deftly intertwined plots, and indefatigable commitment to human dignity, Tezuka elevated manga to an art form. Other works available from Vertical include *Apollo's Song*, *Ode to Kirihito*, and the eight-volume epic *Buddha*, winner of the Eisner and Harvey Awards.

Jacket and binding design by Chip Kidd

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www.vertical-inc.com

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GRAPHIC NOVEL

PRAISE FOR OSAMU TEZUKA

"It's a mark of his artistic singularity that almost 20 years after his death, we are still playing catch up with his achievements." - **Newsweek**

"Tezuka was like a god for me. He created a world of comics that didn't exist before."
- **Yoshihiro Tatsumi**, author of *The Push Man* and *Abandon the Old in Tokyo*

"There's never been anything like Tezuka's body of work, and there probably never will be again."
- **Advanced Media Network**

AGES 16+

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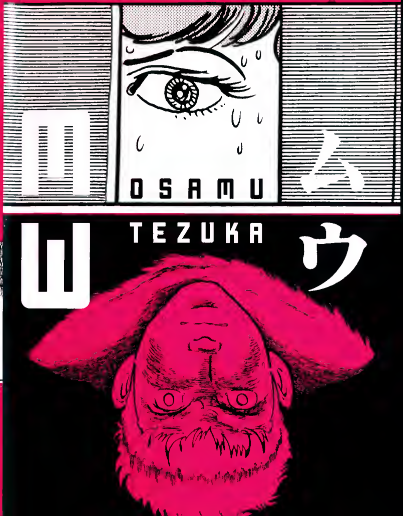
OSAMU
TEZUKA

VERTICAL



U.S. $24.95 / CAN $32.00

EMBRACE ME, FATHER, FOR I HAVE SINNED

Comics god Osamu Tezuka's darkest work, *MW* is a chilling picaresque of evil. Steering clear of the supernatural as well as the cuddly designs and slapstick humor that enliven many of Tezuka's better-known works, *MW* explores a stark modern reality where neither divine nor secular justice seems to prevail. This willfully "anti-Tezuka" achievement from the master's own pen nevertheless pulsates with his unique genius.

Michio Yuki has it all: looks, intelligence, a pedigree as the scion of a famous Kabuki family, a promising career at a major bank, legions of female admirers. But underneath the sheen of perfection lurks a secret with the power to shake the world to its foundations.

During a boyhood excursion to one of the southern archipelagos near Okinawa, Yuki barely survived exposure to a poison gas stored at a foreign military facility. The leakage annihilated all of the island's inhabitants but was promptly covered up by the authorities, leaving Yuki as an unacknowledged witness—one whose sense of right and wrong, however, the potent nerve agent managed to obliterate.

Now, fifteen years later, Yuki is a social climber of Balzacian proportions, infiltrating the worlds of finance and politics by day while brutally murdering children and women by night—perversely using his Kabuki-honed skills as a female impersonator to pass himself off as the women he's killed. His drive, however, will not be satiated with a promotion here and a rape there. Michio Yuki has a far more ominous objective: obtaining MW, the ultimate weapon that spared his life but robbed him of all conscience.

[CONTINUED ON BACK FLAP]

OSAMU TEZUKA

VERTICAL

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BOOK DESIGN CHIP KIDD
PRODUCTION HIROKO MIZUNO
MAMI YAMADA
AYAKO FUKUMITSU
SHINOBU SATO
AKANE ISHIDA

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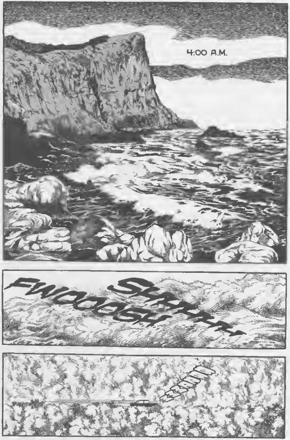
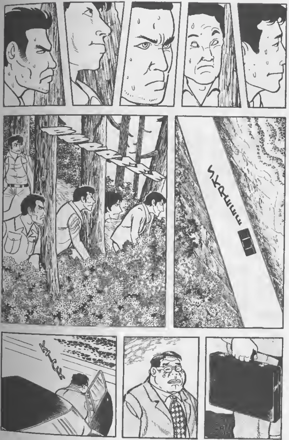
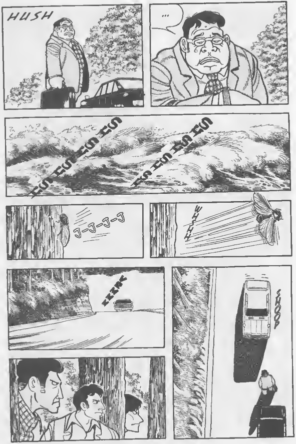
MW

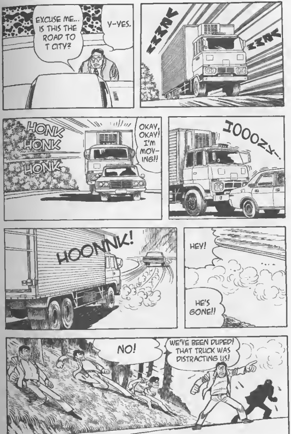
CHAPTER ONE

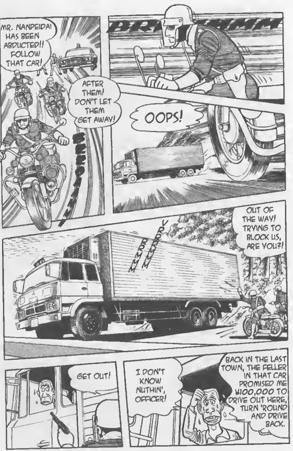
KIDNAPPING

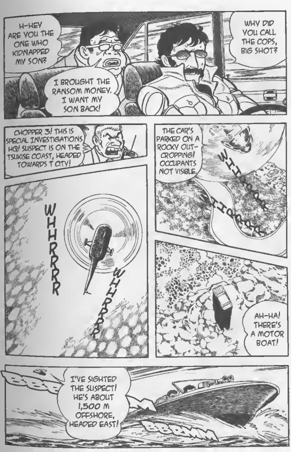

4:00 A.M.
SHHHHH
FWOOOSH

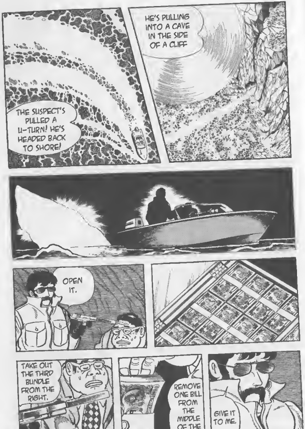

SKREEEE
KLICK

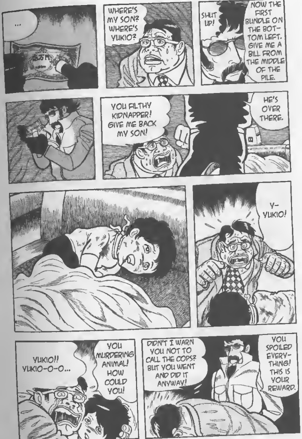

HUSH
...
J-J-J-J
SHOOP

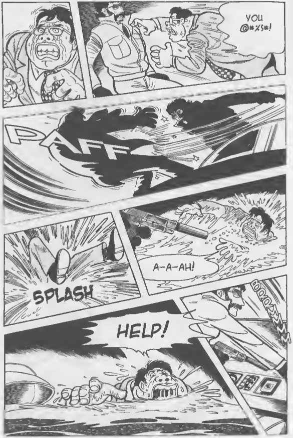

EXCUSE ME... IS THIS THE ROAD TO T CITY?
Y-YES.
HONK HONK HONK
OKAY, OKAY! I'M MOV-ING!!
HOONNK!
HEY!
...
HE'S GONE!!
NO!
WE'VE BEEN DUPED! THAT TRUCK WAS DISTRACTING US!

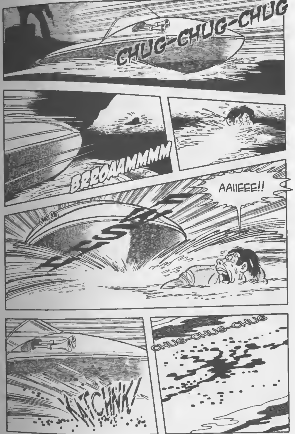

MR. NANPEIDAI HAS BEEN ABDUCTED!! FOLLOW THAT CAR!
BRRMMMM
AFTER THEM! DON'T LET THEM GET AWAY!
OOPS!
OUT OF THE WAY! TRYING TO BLOCK US, ARE YOU?!
VRRRMM BRRMM
GET OUT!
I DON'T KNOW NUTHIN', OFFICER!
BACK IN THE LAST TOWN, THE FELLER IN THAT CAR PROMISED ME ¥100,000 TO DRIVE OUT HERE, TURN 'ROUND AND DRIVE BACK.

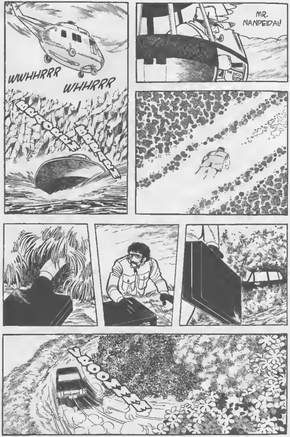

H-HEY ARE YOU THE ONE WHO KIDNAPPED MY SON?
WHY DID YOU CALL THE COPS, BIG SHOT?
I BROUGHT THE RANSOM MONEY. I WANT MY SON BACK!
CHOPPER 3! THIS IS SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS HQ! SUSPECT IS ON THE TSUKISE COAST, HEADED TOWARDS T CITY!
THE CAR'S PARKED ON A ROCKY OUT-CROPPING! OCCUPANTS NOT VISIBLE.
WHRRRR
WHRRRR
WHRRRRR
AH-HA! THERE'S A MOTOR BOAT!
I'VE SIGHTED THE SUSPECT! HE'S ABOUT 1,500 M OFFSHORE, HEADED EAST!
BBBRMMM

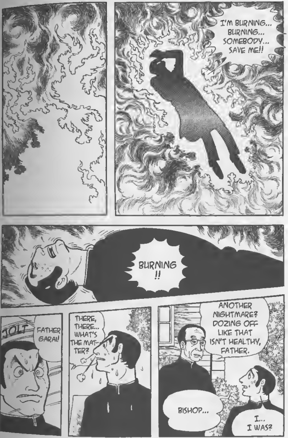

THE SUSPECT'S PULLED A U-TURN! HE'S HEADED BACK TO SHORE!
HE'S PULLING INTO A CAVE IN THE SIDE OF A CLIFF
OPEN IT.
TAKE OUT THE THIRD BUNDLE FROM THE RIGHT.
REMOVE ONE BILL FROM THE MIDDLE OF THE STACK.
GIVE IT TO ME.

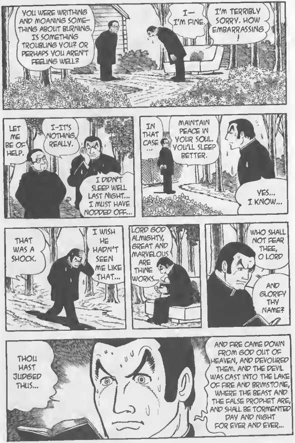

...
WHERE'S MY SON? WHERE'S YUKIO?
SHUT UP!
NOW THE FIRST BUNDLE ON THE BOTTOM LEFT. GIVE ME A BILL FROM THE MIDDLE OF THE PILE.
YOU FILTHY KIDNAPPER! GIVE ME BACK MY SON!
HE'S OVER THERE.
Y- YUKIO!
YUKIO!! YUKIO-O-O...
YOU MURDERING ANIMAL! HOW COULD YOU!
DIDN'T I WARN YOU NOT TO CALL THE COPS? BUT YOU WENT AND DID IT ANYWAY!
YOU SPOILED EVERYTHING! THIS IS YOUR REWARD.

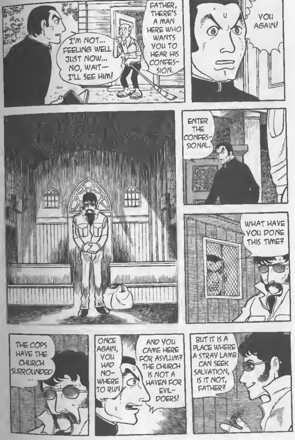

YOU
@*%$*!
PAFF
SPLASH
A-A-AH!
BOOOOMMMM
HELP!

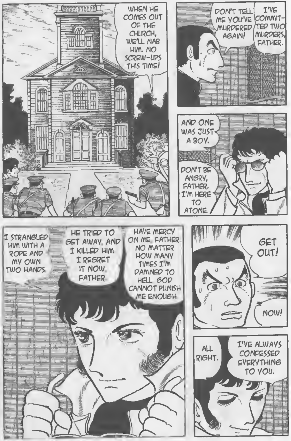

CHUG-CHUG-CHUG
BRROAAMMMM
AAIIEEE!!
HSSSH
CHUG-CHUG-CHUG
KATCHNK!

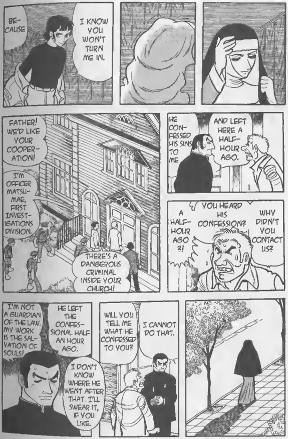

WWHHRRR
WHHRRR
BRAOBRM
BRRAARM
MR. NANPEIDAI!
VROOMMMM

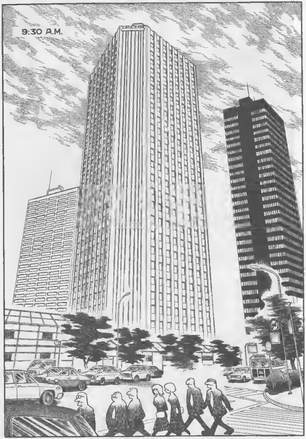

I'M BURNING... BURNING... SOMEBODY... SAVE ME!!
BURNING !!
JOLT
FATHER GARAI!
THERE, THERE... WHAT'S THE MATTER?
ANOTHER NIGHTMARE? DOZING OFF LIKE THAT ISN'T HEALTHY, FATHER.
BISHOP...
I... I WAS?

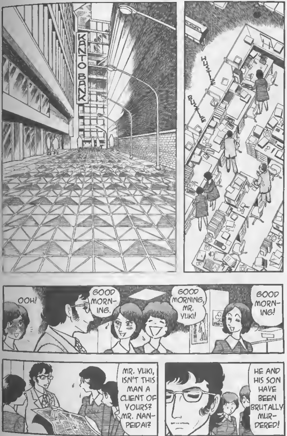

YOU WERE WRITHING AND MOANING SOMETHING ABOUT BURNING. IS SOMETHING TROUBLING YOU? OR PERHAPS YOU AREN'T FEELING WELL?
I— I'M FINE.
I'M TERRIBLY SORRY. HOW EMBARRASSING!
LET ME BE OF HELP.
I-IT'S NOTHING, REALLY.
I DIDN'T SLEEP WELL LAST NIGHT... I MUST HAVE NODDED OFF...
IN THAT CASE...
MAINTAIN PEACE IN YOUR SOUL. YOU'LL SLEEP BETTER.
YES... I KNOW...
THAT WAS A SHOCK.
I WISH HE HADN'T SEEN ME LIKE THAT...
LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, GREAT AND MARVELOUS ARE THINE WORKS...
WHO SHALL NOT FEAR THEE, O LORD
AND GLORIFY THY NAME?
THOU HAST JUDGED THUS...
AND FIRE CAME DOWN FROM GOD OUT OF HEAVEN, AND DEVOURED THEM. AND THE DEVIL WAS CAST INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE AND BRIMSTONE, WHERE THE BEAST AND THE FALSE PROPHET ARE, AND SHALL BE TORMENTED DAY AND NIGHT FOR EVER AND EVER...

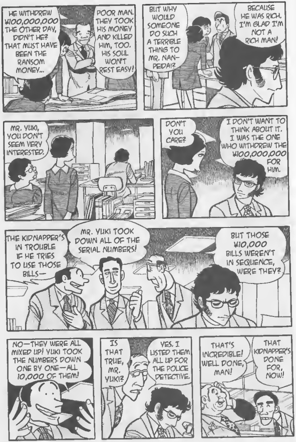

FATHER, THERE'S A MAN HERE WHO WANTS YOU TO HEAR HIS CONFESSION.
I'M NOT... FEELING WELL JUST NOW... NO, WAIT— I'LL SEE HIM!
YOU AGAIN!
ENTER THE CONFESSIONAL.
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE THIS TIME?
THE COPS HAVE THE CHURCH SURROUNDED...
ONCE AGAIN, YOU HAD NOWHERE TO RUN.
AND YOU CAME HERE FOR ASYLUM? THE CHURCH IS NOT A HAVEN FOR EVILDOERS!
BUT IT IS A PLACE WHERE A STRAY LAMB CAN SEEK SALVATION, IS IT NOT, FATHER?

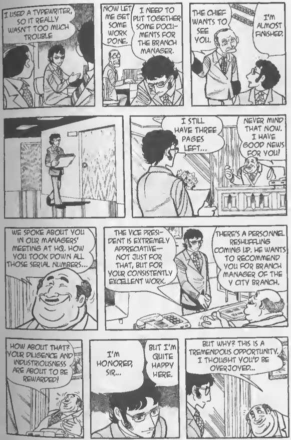

WHEN HE COMES OUT OF THE CHURCH, WE'LL NAB HIM. NO SCREW-UPS THIS TIME!
DON'T TELL ME YOU'VE MURDERED AGAIN!
I'VE COMMITTED TWO MURDERS, FATHER.
AND ONE WAS JUST A BOY.
DON'T BE ANGRY, FATHER. I'M HERE TO ATONE.
I STRANGLED HIM WITH A ROPE AND MY OWN TWO HANDS.
HE TRIED TO GET AWAY, AND I KILLED HIM. I REGRET IT NOW, FATHER.
HAVE MERCY ON ME, FATHER. NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES I'M DAMNED TO HELL, GOD CANNOT PUNISH ME ENOUGH.
GET OUT!
NOW!
ALL RIGHT.
I'VE ALWAYS CONFESSED EVERYTHING TO YOU.

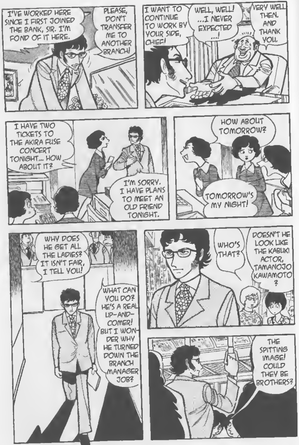

BECAUSE
I KNOW YOU WON'T TURN ME IN.
FATHER! WE'D LIKE YOUR COOPERATION!
I'M OFFICER MATSUMAE, FIRST INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION.
THERE'S A DANGEROUS CRIMINAL INSIDE YOUR CHURCH!
HE CONFESSED HIS SINS TO ME
AND LEFT HERE A HALF-HOUR AGO.
A HALF-HOUR AGO?!
YOU HEARD HIS CONFESSION?
WHY DIDN'T YOU CONTACT US?
I'M NOT A GUARDIAN OF THE LAW. MY WORK IS THE SALVATION OF SOULS!
HE LEFT THE CONFESSIONAL HALF AN HOUR AGO.
WILL YOU TELL ME WHAT HE CONFESSED TO YOU?
I CANNOT DO THAT.
I DON'T KNOW WHERE HE WENT AFTER THAT. I'LL SWEAR IT, IF YOU LIKE.

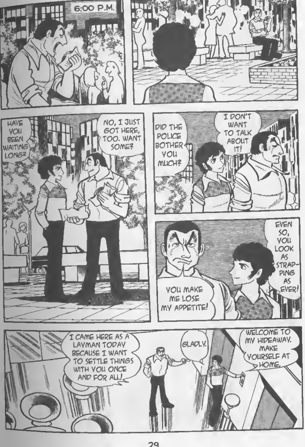

9:30 A.M.

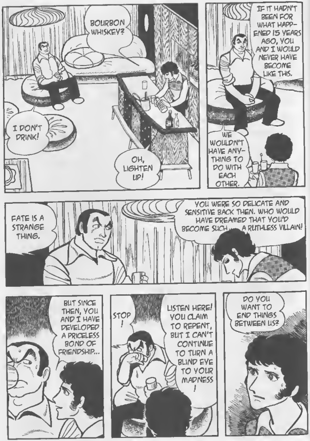

KANTO BANK
HUSTLE
BUSTLE
OOH!
GOOD MORNING.
GOOD MORNING, MR. YUKI!
GOOD MORNING!
MR. YUKI, ISN'T THIS MAN A CLIENT OF YOURS? MR. NANPEIDAI?
HE AND HIS SON HAVE BEEN BRUTALLY MURDERED!

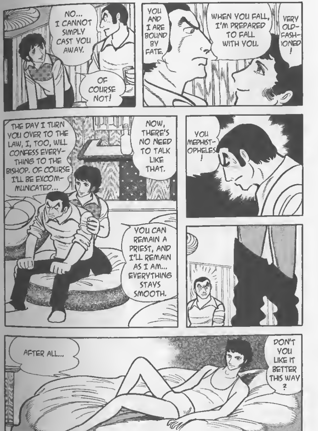

HE WITHDREW ¥100,000,000 THE OTHER DAY, DIDN'T HE? THAT MUST HAVE BEEN THE RANSOM MONEY...
POOR MAN. THEY TOOK HIS MONEY AND KILLED HIM, TOO. HIS SOUL WON'T REST EASY!
BUT WHY WOULD SOMEONE DO SUCH A TERRIBLE THING TO MR. NANPEIDAI?
BECAUSE HE WAS RICH. I'M GLAD I'M NOT A RICH MAN!
MR. YUKI, YOU DON'T SEEM VERY INTERESTED.
DON'T YOU CARE?
I DON'T WANT TO THINK ABOUT IT. I WAS THE ONE WHO WITHDREW THE ¥100,000,000 FOR HIM.
THE KIDNAPPER'S IN TROUBLE IF HE TRIES TO USE THOSE BILLS—
MR. YUKI TOOK DOWN ALL OF THE SERIAL NUMBERS!
BUT THOSE ¥10,000 BILLS WEREN'T IN SEQUENCE, WERE THEY?
NO—THEY WERE ALL MIXED UP! YUKI TOOK THE NUMBERS DOWN ONE BY ONE—ALL 10,000 OF THEM!
IS THAT TRUE, MR. YUKI?
YES. I LISTED THEM ALL UP FOR THE POLICE DETECTIVE.
THAT'S INCREDIBLE! WELL DONE, MAN!
THAT KIDNAPPER'S DONE FOR, NOW!

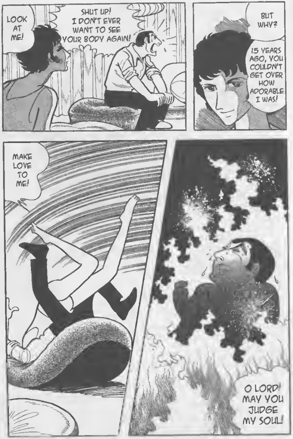

I USED A TYPEWRITER, SO IT REALLY WASN'T TOO MUCH TROUBLE
NOW LET ME GET SOME WORK DONE.
I NEED TO PUT TOGETHER SOME DOCUMENTS FOR THE BRANCH MANAGER.
THE CHIEF WANTS TO SEE YOU.
I'M ALMOST FINISHED.
I STILL HAVE THREE PAGES LEFT...
NEVER MIND THAT NOW. I HAVE GOOD NEWS FOR YOU!
WE SPOKE ABOUT YOU IN OUR MANAGERS' MEETING AT HQ. HOW YOU TOOK DOWN ALL THOSE SERIAL NUMBERS...
THE VICE PRESIDENT IS EXTREMELY APPRECIATIVE—NOT JUST FOR THAT, BUT FOR YOUR CONSISTENTLY EXCELLENT WORK.
THERE'S A PERSONNEL RESHUFFLING COMING UP. HE WANTS TO RECOMMEND YOU FOR BRANCH MANAGER OF THE Y CITY BRANCH.
HOW ABOUT THAT? YOUR DILIGENCE AND INDUSTRIOUSNESS ARE ABOUT TO BE REWARDED!
I'M HONORED, SIR...
BUT I'M QUITE HAPPY HERE.
BUT WHY? THIS IS A TREMENDOUS OPPORTUNITY. I THOUGHT YOU'D BE OVERJOYED...


I'VE WORKED HERE SINCE I FIRST JOINED THE BANK, SIR. I'M FOND OF IT HERE.
PLEASE, DON'T TRANSFER ME TO ANOTHER BRANCH!
I WANT TO CONTINUE TO WORK BY YOUR SIDE, CHIEF!
WELL, WELL! ...I NEVER EXPECTED ...!
VERY WELL THEN. AND THANK YOU.
I HAVE TWO TICKETS TO THE AKIRA FUSE CONCERT TONIGHT... HOW ABOUT IT?
I'M SORRY. I HAVE PLANS TO MEET AN OLD FRIEND TONIGHT.
HOW ABOUT TOMORROW?
TOMORROW'S MY NIGHT!
WHY DOES HE GET ALL THE LADIES? IT ISN'T FAIR, I TELL YOU!
WHAT CAN YOU DO? HE'S A REAL UP-AND-COMER! BUT I WONDER WHY HE TURNED DOWN THE BRANCH MANAGER JOB?
WHO'S THAT?
DOESN'T HE LOOK LIKE THE KABUKI ACTOR, TAMANOJO KAWAMOTO?
THE SPITTING IMAGE! COULD THEY BE BROTHERS?


6:00 P.M.
HAVE YOU BEEN WAITING LONG?
NO, I JUST GOT HERE, TOO. WANT SOME?
DID THE POLICE BOTHER YOU MUCH?
I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT!
EVEN SO, YOU LOOK AS STRAPPING AS EVER!
YOU MAKE ME LOSE MY APPETITE!
I CAME HERE AS A LAYMAN TODAY BECAUSE I WANT TO SETTLE THINGS WITH YOU ONCE AND FOR ALL!
GLADLY.
WELCOME TO MY HIDEAWAY. MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME.

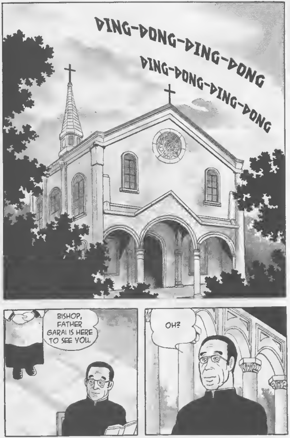

BOURBON WHISKEY?
I DON'T DRINK!
OH, LIGHTEN UP!
IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR WHAT HAPPENED 15 YEARS AGO, YOU AND I WOULD NEVER HAVE BECOME LIKE THIS.
WE WOULDN'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH EACH OTHER.
FATE IS A STRANGE THING.
YOU WERE SO DELICATE AND SENSITIVE BACK THEN. WHO WOULD HAVE DREAMED THAT YOU'D BECOME SUCH... A RUTHLESS VILLAIN!
BUT SINCE THEN, YOU AND I HAVE DEVELOPED A PRICELESS BOND OF FRIENDSHIP...
STOP!
LISTEN HERE! YOU CLAIM TO REPENT, BUT I CAN'T CONTINUE TO TURN A BLIND EYE TO YOUR MADNESS!
DO YOU WANT TO END THINGS BETWEEN US?

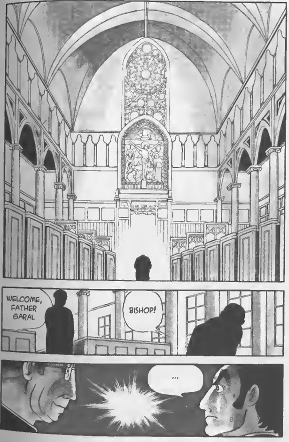

NO... I CANNOT SIMPLY CAST YOU AWAY.
OF COURSE NOT!
YOU AND I ARE BOUND BY FATE.
WHEN YOU FALL, I'M PREPARED TO FALL WITH YOU.
VERY OLD-FASHIONED!
THE DAY I TURN YOU OVER TO THE LAW, I, TOO, WILL CONFESS EVERYTHING TO THE BISHOP. OF COURSE I'LL BE EXCOMMUNICATED...
NOW, THERE'S NO NEED TO TALK LIKE THAT.
YOU CAN REMAIN A PRIEST, AND I'LL REMAIN AS I AM... EVERYTHING STAYS SMOOTH.
YOU MEPHISTOPHELES!
AFTER ALL...
DON'T YOU LIKE IT BETTER THIS WAY?

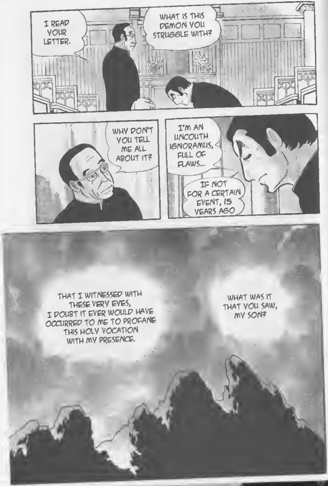

LOOK AT ME!
SHUT UP! I DON'T EVER WANT TO SEE YOUR BODY AGAIN!
BUT WHY?
15 YEARS AGO, YOU COULDN'T GET OVER HOW ADORABLE I WAS!
MAKE LOVE TO ME!
O LORD! MAY YOU JUDGE MY SOUL!

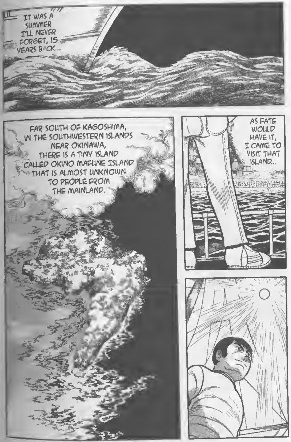
CHAPTER TWO

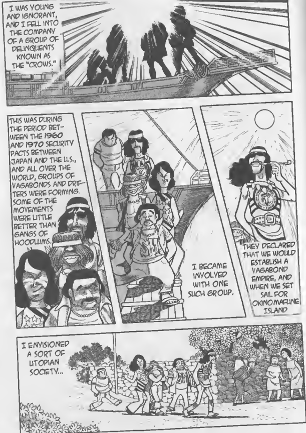
NIGHTMARE

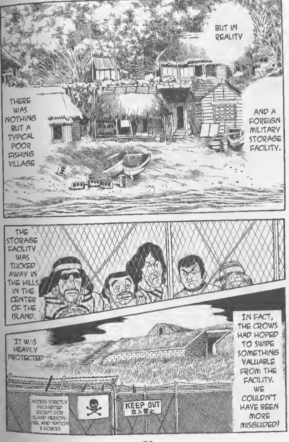

DING-DONG-DING-DONG
DING-DONG-DING-DONG
BISHOP, FATHER GARAI IS HERE TO SEE YOU.
OH?

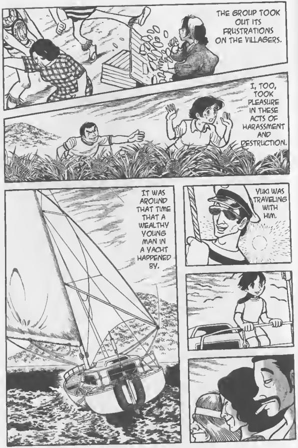

WELCOME, FATHER GARAI.
BISHOP!
...

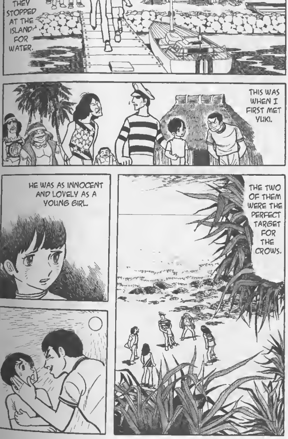

I READ YOUR LETTER.
WHAT IS THIS DEMON YOU STRUGGLE WITH?
WHY DON'T YOU TELL ME ALL ABOUT IT?
I'M AN UNCOUTH IGNORAMUS, FULL OF FLAWS...
IF NOT FOR A CERTAIN EVENT, 15 YEARS AGO
THAT I WITNESSED WITH THESE VERY EYES, I DOUBT IT EVER WOULD HAVE OCCURRED TO ME TO PROFANE THIS HOLY VOCATION WITH MY PRESENCE.
WHAT WAS IT THAT YOU SAW, MY SON?

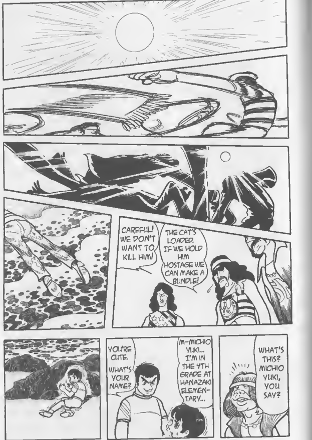

IT WAS A SUMMER I'LL NEVER FORGET, 15 YEARS BACK...
FAR SOUTH OF KAGOSHIMA, IN THE SOUTHWESTERN ISLANDS NEAR OKINAWA, THERE IS A TINY ISLAND CALLED OKINO MAFUNE ISLAND THAT IS ALMOST UNKNOWN TO PEOPLE FROM THE MAINLAND.
AS FATE WOULD HAVE IT, I CAME TO VISIT THAT ISLAND...

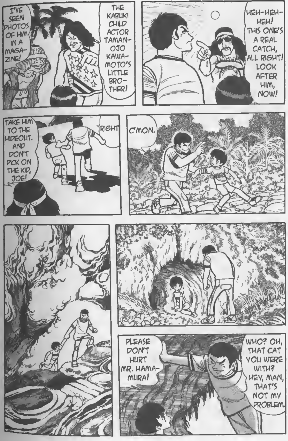

I WAS YOUNG AND IGNORANT, AND I FELL INTO THE COMPANY OF A GROUP OF DELINQUENTS KNOWN AS THE "CROWS."
THIS WAS DURING THE PERIOD BETWEEN THE 1960 AND 1970 SECURITY PACTS BETWEEN JAPAN AND THE U.S., AND ALL OVER THE WORLD, GROUPS OF VAGABONDS AND DRIFTERS WERE FORMING. SOME OF THE MOVEMENTS WERE LITTLE BETTER THAN GANGS OF HOODLUMS.
I BECAME INVOLVED WITH ONE SUCH GROUP.
THEY DECLARED THAT WE WOULD ESTABLISH A VAGABOND EMPIRE, AND WHEN WE SET SAIL FOR OKINOMAFUNE ISLAND
I ENVISIONED A SORT OF UTOPIAN SOCIETY...

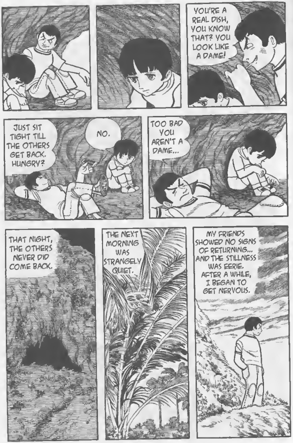

BUT IN REALITY
THERE WAS NOTHING BUT A TYPICAL POOR FISHING VILLAGE
AND A FOREIGN MILITARY STORAGE FACILITY.
THE STORAGE FACILITY WAS TUCKED AWAY IN THE HILLS IN THE CENTER OF THE ISLAND.
IT WAS HEAVILY PROTECTED
IN FACT, THE CROWS HAD HOPED TO SWIPE SOMETHING VALUABLE FROM THE FACILITY. WE COULDN'T HAVE BEEN MORE MISGUIDED!
ACCESS STRICTLY PROHIBITED EXCEPT FOR ISLAND PERSONNEL AND NATION X FORCES
KEEP OUT
立入禁止

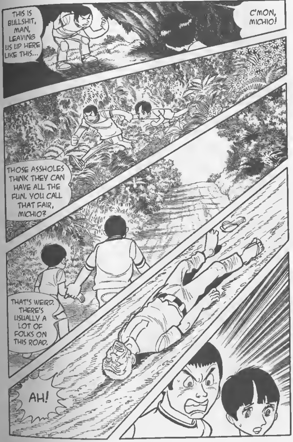

THE GROUP TOOK OUT ITS FRUSTRATIONS ON THE VILLAGERS.
I, TOO, TOOK PLEASURE IN THESE ACTS OF HARASSMENT AND DESTRUCTION.
IT WAS AROUND THAT TIME THAT A WEALTHY YOUNG MAN IN A YACHT HAPPENED BY.
YUKI WAS TRAVELING WITH HIM.

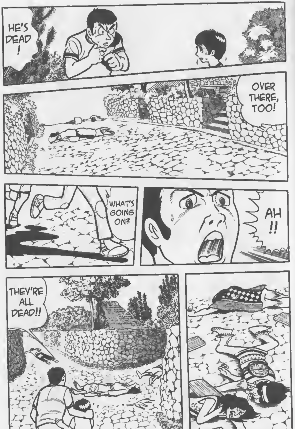

THEY STOPPED AT THE ISLAND FOR WATER.
THIS WAS WHEN I FIRST MET YUKI.
HE WAS AS INNOCENT AND LOVELY AS A YOUNG GIRL.
THE TWO OF THEM WERE THE PERFECT TARGET FOR THE CROWS.

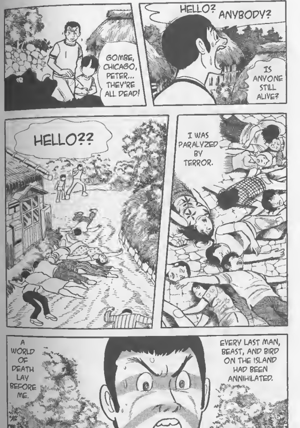

CAREFUL! WE DON'T WANT TO KILL HIM!
THE CAT'S LOADED. IF WE HOLD HIM HOSTAGE WE CAN MAKE A BUNDLE!
YOU'RE CUTE. WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
M-MICHIO YUKI... I'M IN THE 4TH GRADE AT HANAZAKI ELEMENTARY...
WHAT'S THIS? MICHIO YUKI, YOU SAY?

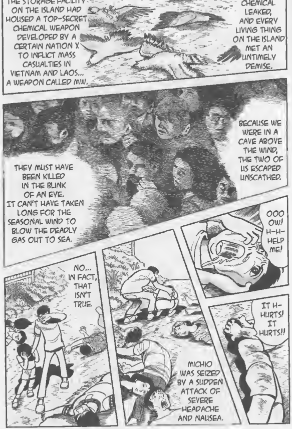

I'VE SEEN PHOTOS OF HIM IN A MAGAZINE!
THE KABUKI CHILD ACTOR TAMANOJO KAWAMOTO'S LITTLE BROTHER!
HEH-HEH-HEH! THIS ONE'S A REAL CATCH, ALL RIGHT! LOOK AFTER HIM, NOW!
TAKE HIM TO THE HIDEOUT. AND DON'T PICK ON THE KID, JOE!
RIGHT
C'MON.
PLEASE DON'T HURT MR. HAMAMURA!
WHO? OH, THAT CAT YOU WERE WITH? HEY, MAN, THAT'S NOT MY PROBLEM.

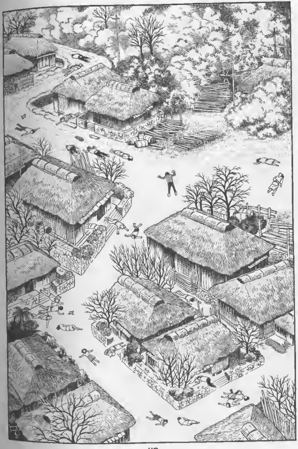

YOU'RE A REAL DISH, YOU KNOW THAT? YOU LOOK LIKE A DAME!
JUST SIT TIGHT TILL THE OTHERS GET BACK. HUNGRY?
NO.
TOO BAD YOU AREN'T A DAME...
THAT NIGHT, THE OTHERS NEVER DID COME BACK.
THE NEXT MORNING WAS STRANGELY QUIET.
MY FRIENDS SHOWED NO SIGNS OF RETURNING... AND THE STILLNESS WAS EERIE. AFTER A WHILE, I BEGAN TO GET NERVOUS.

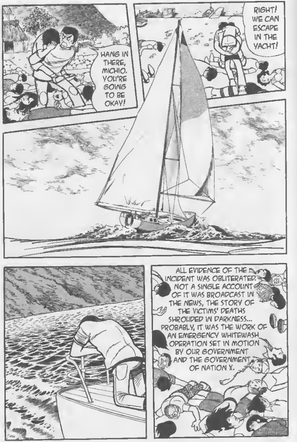

THIS IS BULLSHIT, MAN, LEAVING US UP HERE LIKE THIS...
C'MON, MICHIO!
THOSE ASSHOLES THINK THEY CAN HAVE ALL THE FUN. YOU CALL THAT FAIR, MICHIO?
THAT'S WEIRD. THERE'S USUALLY A LOT OF FOLKS ON THIS ROAD.
AH!

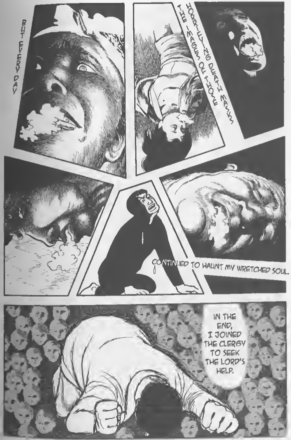

HE'S DEAD!
OVER THERE, TOO!
WHAT'S GOING ON?
AH!!
THEY'RE ALL DEAD!!

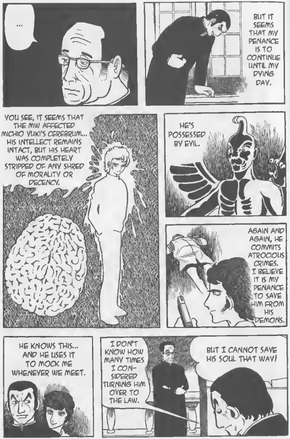

GOMBE, CHICAGO, PETER... THEY'RE ALL DEAD!
HELLO? ANYBODY?
IS ANYONE STILL ALIVE?
HELLO??
I WAS PARALYZED BY TERROR.
A WORLD OF DEATH LAY BEFORE ME.
EVERY LAST MAN, BEAST, AND BIRD ON THE ISLAND HAD BEEN ANNIHILATED.

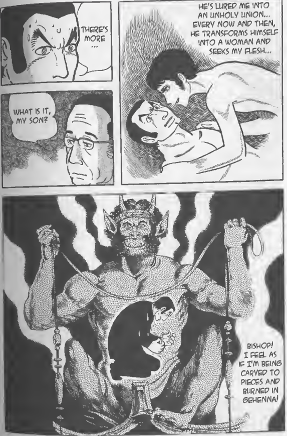

THE STORAGE FACILITY ON THE ISLAND HAD HOUSED A TOP-SECRET CHEMICAL WEAPON DEVELOPED BY A CERTAIN NATION X TO INFLICT MASS CASUALTIES IN VIETNAM AND LAOS... A WEAPON CALLED MW.
BUT THE CHEMICAL LEAKED, AND EVERY LIVING THING ON THE ISLAND MET AN UNTIMELY DEMISE.
BECAUSE WE WERE IN A CAVE ABOVE THE WIND, THE TWO OF US ESCAPED UNSCATHED.
THEY MUST HAVE BEEN KILLED IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE. IT CAN'T HAVE TAKEN LONG FOR THE SEASONAL WIND TO BLOW THE DEADLY GAS OUT TO SEA.
NO... IN FACT, THAT ISN'T TRUE.
MICHIO WAS SEIZED BY A SUDDEN ATTACK OF SEVERE HEADACHE AND NAUSEA.
OOO OW! H-H-HELP ME!
IT H-HURTS! IT HURTS!!

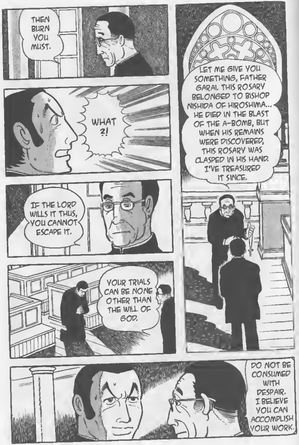


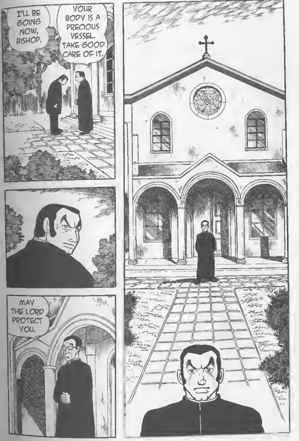

HANG IN THERE, MICHIO. YOU'RE GOING TO BE OKAY!
RIGHT! WE CAN ESCAPE IN THE YACHT!
ALL EVIDENCE OF THE INCIDENT WAS OBLITERATED. NOT A SINGLE ACCOUNT OF IT WAS BROADCAST IN THE NEWS, THE STORY OF THE VICTIMS' DEATHS SHROUDED IN DARKNESS... PROBABLY, IT WAS THE WORK OF AN EMERGENCY WHITEWASH OPERATION SET IN MOTION BY OUR GOVERNMENT AND THE GOVERNMENT OF NATION X.


BUT EVERY DAY
THE IMAGES OF THOSE
HORRIFYING DEATH MASKS
CONTINUED TO HAUNT MY WRETCHED SOUL.
IN THE END, I JOINED THE CLERGY TO SEEK THE LORD'S HELP.


...
BUT IT SEEMS THAT MY PENANCE IS TO CONTINUE UNTIL MY DYING DAY.
YOU SEE, IT SEEMS THAT THE MW AFFECTED MICHIO YUKI'S CEREBRUM... HIS INTELLECT REMAINS INTACT, BUT HIS HEART WAS COMPLETELY STRIPPED OF ANY SHRED OF MORALITY OR DECENCY.
HE'S POSSESSED BY EVIL.
AGAIN AND AGAIN, HE COMMITS ATROCIOUS CRIMES. I BELIEVE IT IS MY PENANCE TO SAVE HIM FROM HIS DEMONS.
HE KNOWS THIS... AND HE USES IT TO MOCK ME WHENEVER WE MEET.
I DON'T KNOW HOW MANY TIMES I CONSIDERED TURNING HIM OVER TO THE LAW.
BUT I CANNOT SAVE HIS SOUL THAT WAY!

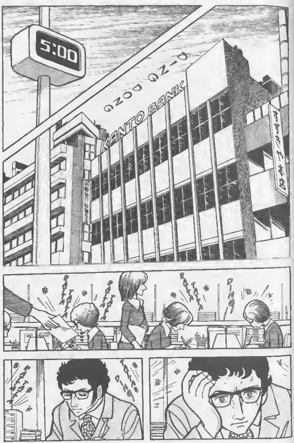

THERE'S MORE ...
WHAT IS IT, MY SON?
HE'S LURED ME INTO AN UNHOLY UNION... EVERY NOW AND THEN, HE TRANSFORMS HIMSELF INTO A WOMAN AND SEEKS MY FLESH...
BISHOP! I FEEL AS IF I'M BEING CARVED TO PIECES AND BURNED IN GEHENNA!

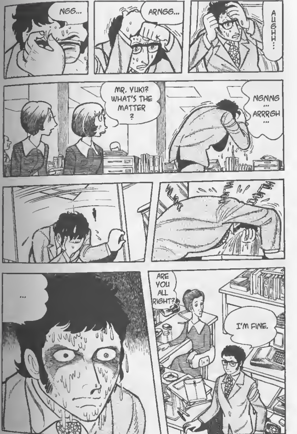

THEN BURN YOU MUST.
WHAT ?!
IF THE LORD WILLS IT THUS, YOU CANNOT ESCAPE IT.
YOUR TRIALS CAN BE NONE OTHER THAN THE WILL OF GOD.
LET ME GIVE YOU SOMETHING, FATHER GARAI. THIS ROSARY BELONGED TO BISHOP NISHIDA OF HIROSHIMA... HE DIED IN THE BLAST OF THE A-BOMB, BUT WHEN HIS REMAINS WERE DISCOVERED, THIS ROSARY WAS CLASPED IN HIS HAND. I'VE TREASURED IT SINCE.
DO NOT BE CONSUMED WITH DESPAIR. I BELIEVE YOU CAN ACCOMPLISH YOUR WORK.

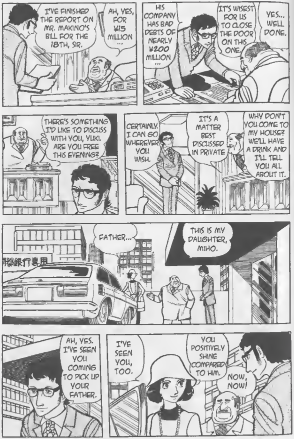

I'LL BE GOING NOW, BISHOP.
YOUR BODY IS A PRECIOUS VESSEL. TAKE GOOD CARE OF IT.
MAY THE LORD PROTECT YOU.

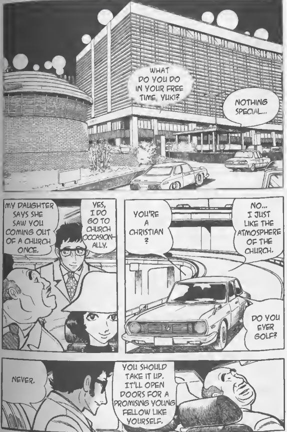
CHAPTER THREE

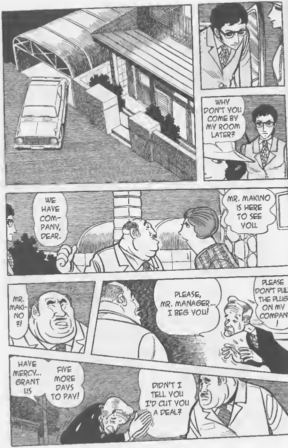
BOUND BY FATE

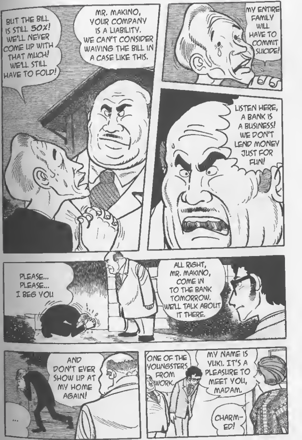

5:00
KANTO BANK
KANTO BANK
すずきや本店
RATTA TATTA
RATTA TATTA
RATTA TATTA
DING!
RATTA TATTA
TATTA DING!

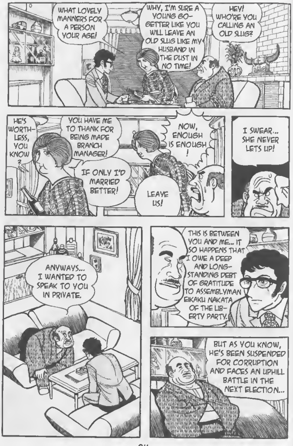

NGG...
ARNGG...
AUGHH...
MR. YUKI? WHAT'S THE MATTER?
NGNNG ... ARRRGH ...
...
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
I'M FINE.

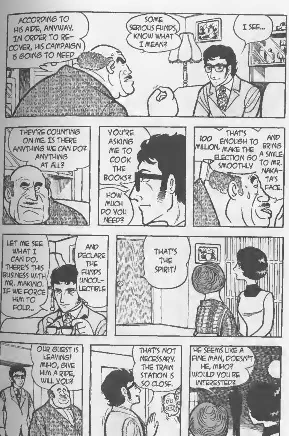

I'VE FINISHED THE REPORT ON MR. MAKINO'S BILL FOR THE 18TH, SIR.
AH, YES, FOR ¥15 MILLION ...
HIS COMPANY HAS BAD DEBTS OF NEARLY ¥200 MILLION ...
IT'S WISEST FOR US TO CLOSE THE DOOR ON THIS ONE.
YES... WELL DONE.
THERE'S SOMETHING I'D LIKE TO DISCUSS WITH YOU, YUKI. ARE YOU FREE THIS EVENING?
CERTAINLY. I CAN GO WHEREVER YOU WISH.
IT'S A MATTER BEST DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE.
WHY DON'T YOU COME TO MY HOUSE? WE'LL HAVE A DRINK AND I'LL TELL YOU ALL ABOUT IT.
都銀行専用
FATHER...
THIS IS MY DAUGHTER, MIHO.
AH, YES. I'VE SEEN YOU COMING TO PICK UP YOUR FATHER.
I'VE SEEN YOU, TOO.
YOU POSITIVELY SHINE COMPARED TO HIM.
NOW, NOW!

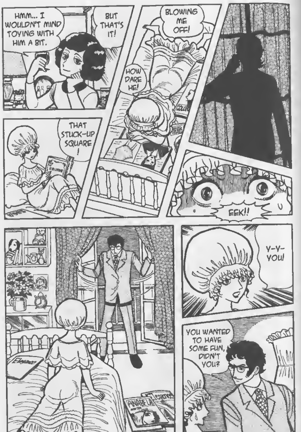

WHAT DO YOU DO IN YOUR FREE TIME, YUKI?
NOTHING SPECIAL...
MY DAUGHTER SAYS SHE SAW YOU COMING OUT OF A CHURCH ONCE.
YES, I DO GO TO CHURCH OCCASIONALLY.
YOU'RE A CHRISTIAN?
NO... I JUST LIKE THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE CHURCH.
DO YOU EVER GOLF?
NEVER.
YOU SHOULD TAKE IT UP. IT'LL OPEN DOORS FOR A PROMISING YOUNG FELLOW LIKE YOURSELF.

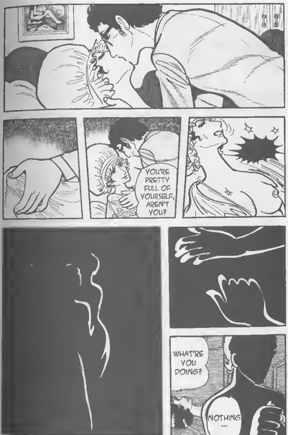

WHY DON'T YOU COME BY MY ROOM LATER?
WE HAVE COMPANY, DEAR.
MR. MAKINO IS HERE TO SEE YOU.
MR. MAKINO ?!
PLEASE, MR. MANAGER... I BEG YOU!
PLEASE DON'T PULL THE PLUG ON MY COMPANY!
HAVE MERCY... GRANT US
FIVE MORE DAYS TO PAY!
DIDN'T I TELL YOU I'D CUT YOU A DEAL?

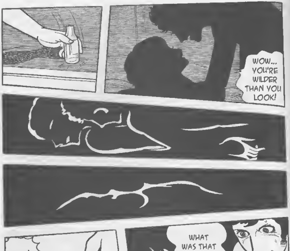

MR. MAKINO, YOUR COMPANY IS A LIABILITY. WE CAN'T CONSIDER WAIVING THE BILL IN A CASE LIKE THIS.
BUT THE BILL IS STILL 50%! WE'LL NEVER COME UP WITH THAT MUCH! WE'LL STILL HAVE TO FOLD!
MY ENTIRE FAMILY WILL HAVE TO COMMIT SUICIDE!
LISTEN HERE, A BANK IS A BUSINESS! WE DON'T LEND MONEY JUST FOR FUN!
PLEASE... PLEASE... I BEG YOU
ALL RIGHT, MR. MAKINO, COME IN TO THE BANK TOMORROW. WE'LL TALK ABOUT IT THERE.
...
AND DON'T EVER SHOW UP AT MY HOME AGAIN!
ONE OF THE YOUNGSTERS FROM WORK.
MY NAME IS YUKI. IT'S A PLEASURE TO MEET YOU, MADAM.
CHARMED!

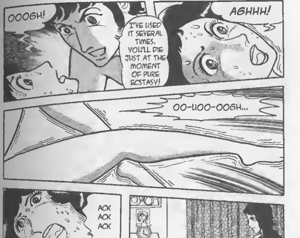

WHAT LOVELY MANNERS FOR A PERSON YOUR AGE!
WHY, I'M SURE A YOUNG GO-GETTER LIKE YOU WILL LEAVE AN OLD SLUG LIKE MY HUSBAND IN THE DUST IN NO TIME!
HEY! WHO'RE YOU CALLING AN OLD SLUG?
HE'S WORTHLESS, YOU KNOW?
YOU HAVE ME TO THANK FOR BEING MADE BRANCH MANAGER!
IF ONLY I'D MARRIED BETTER!
NOW, ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!
LEAVE US!
I SWEAR... SHE NEVER LETS UP!
ANYWAYS... I WANTED TO SPEAK TO YOU IN PRIVATE.
THIS IS BETWEEN YOU AND ME... IT SO HAPPENS THAT I OWE A DEEP AND LONG-STANDING DEBT OF GRATITUDE TO ASSEMBLYMAN EIKAKU NAKATA OF THE LIBERTY PARTY.
BUT AS YOU KNOW, HE'S BEEN SUSPENDED FOR CORRUPTION AND FACES AN UPHILL BATTLE IN THE NEXT ELECTION...

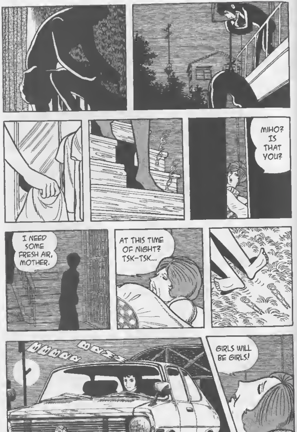

ACCORDING TO HIS AIDE, ANYWAY. IN ORDER TO RECOVER, HIS CAMPAIGN IS GOING TO NEED
SOME SERIOUS FUNDS, KNOW WHAT I MEAN?
I SEE...
THEY'RE COUNTING ON ME. IS THERE ANYTHING WE CAN DO? ANYTHING AT ALL?
YOU'RE ASKING ME TO COOK THE BOOKS?
HOW MUCH DO YOU NEED?
100 MILLION.
THAT'S ENOUGH TO MAKE THE ELECTION GO SMOOTHLY
AND BRING A SMILE TO MR. NAKATA'S FACE.
LET ME SEE WHAT I CAN DO. THERE'S THIS BUSINESS WITH MR. MAKINO. IF WE FORCE HIM TO FOLD...
AND DECLARE THE FUNDS UNCOLLECTIBLE
THAT'S THE SPIRIT!
OUR GUEST IS LEAVING! MIHO, GIVE HIM A RIDE, WILL YOU?
THAT'S NOT NECESSARY. THE TRAIN STATION IS SO CLOSE.
HE SEEMS LIKE A FINE MAN, DOESN'T HE, MIHO? WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED?

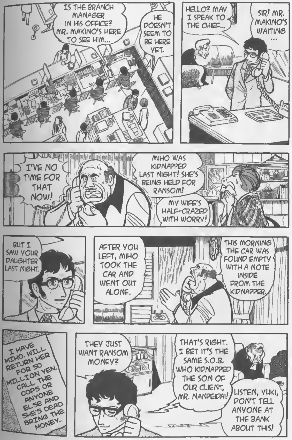

HMM... I WOULDN'T MIND TOYING WITH HIM A BIT.
BUT THAT'S IT!
BLOWING ME OFF!
HOW DARE HE!
THAT STUCK-UP SQUARE!
EEK!!
Y-Y-YOU!
YOU WANTED TO HAVE SOME FUN, DIDN'T YOU?

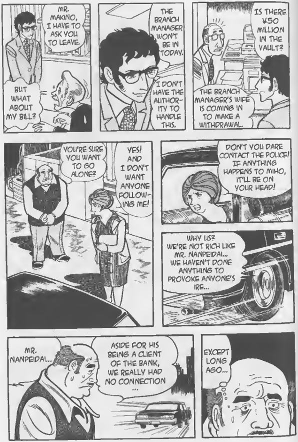

YOU'RE PRETTY FULL OF YOURSELF, AREN'T YOU?
WHAT'RE YOU DOING?
NOTHING ...

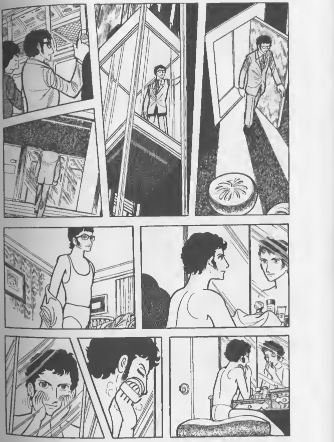

WOW... YOU'RE WILDER THAN YOU LOOK!
OW!
WHAT WAS THAT SHOT?
THAT WAS PICROTOXIN.
NO! I DON'T WANT ANY FUNNY DRUGS!
HEH HEH ...
IT'S TOO LATE, MIHO. I GAVE YOU A LETHAL DOSE!
IT'LL MAKE THE MUSCLES OF YOUR VAGINA CONTRACT— IT FEELS INCREDIBLE!
YOU'LL DIE, OF COURSE ...

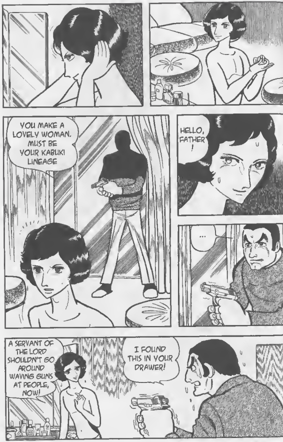

OOOGH!
I'VE USED IT SEVERAL TIMES. YOU'LL DIE JUST AT THE MOMENT OF PURE ECSTASY!
AGHHH!
OO-UOO-OOGH...
ACK ACK ACK

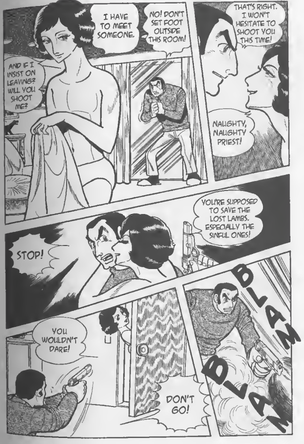

MIHO? IS THAT YOU?
I NEED SOME FRESH AIR, MOTHER.
AT THIS TIME OF NIGHT? TSK-TSK...
GIRLS WILL BE GIRLS!

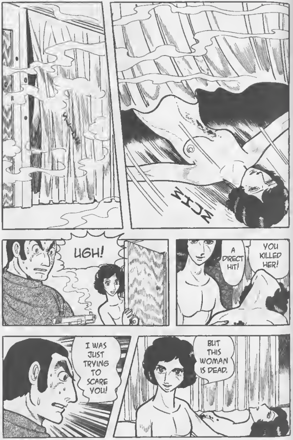

IS THE BRANCH MANAGER IN HIS OFFICE? MR. MAKINO'S HERE TO SEE HIM...
HE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE HERE YET.
HELLO? MAY I SPEAK TO THE CHIEF...
SIR! MR. MAKINO'S WAITING ...
I'VE NO TIME FOR THAT NOW!
MIHO WAS KIDNAPPED LAST NIGHT! SHE'S BEING HELD FOR RANSOM!
MY WIFE'S HALF-CRAZED WITH WORRY!
BUT I SAW YOUR DAUGHTER LAST NIGHT.
AFTER YOU LEFT, MIHO TOOK THE CAR AND WENT OUT ALONE.
THIS MORNING THE CAR WAS FOUND EMPTY WITH A NOTE INSIDE FROM THE KIDNAPPER.
I HAVE MIHO. WILL RETURN HER FOR 50 MILLION YEN. CALL THE COPS OR ANYONE ELSE AND SHE'S DEAD BRING THE MONEY...
THEY JUST WANT RANSOM MONEY?
THAT'S RIGHT. I BET IT'S THE SAME S.O.B. WHO KIDNAPPED THE SON OF OUR CLIENT, MR. NANPEIDAI!
LISTEN, YUKI, DON'T TELL ANYONE AT THE BANK ABOUT THIS!

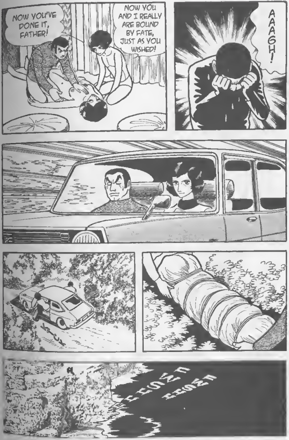

MR. MAKINO, I HAVE TO ASK YOU TO LEAVE.
BUT WHAT ABOUT MY BILL?
THE BRANCH MANAGER WON'T BE IN TODAY.
I DON'T HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO HANDLE THIS.
IS THERE ¥50 MILLION IN THE VAULT?
THE BRANCH MANAGER'S WIFE IS COMING IN TO MAKE A WITHDRAWAL.
YOU'RE SURE YOU WANT TO GO ALONE?
YES! AND I DON'T WANT ANYONE FOLLOWING ME!
DON'T YOU DARE CONTACT THE POLICE! IF ANYTHING HAPPENS TO MIHO, IT'LL BE ON YOUR HEAD!
WHY US? WE'RE NOT RICH LIKE MR. NANPEIDAI... WE HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING TO PROVOKE ANYONE'S IRE...
MR. NANPEIDAI...
ASIDE FOR HIS BEING A CLIENT OF THE BANK, WE REALLY HAD NO CONNECTION ...
EXCEPT LONG AGO...

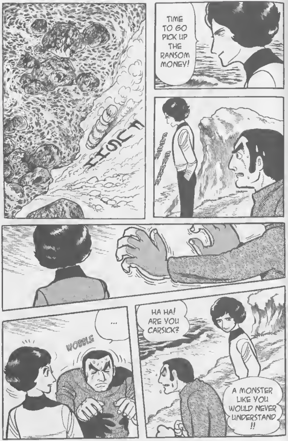



YOU MAKE A LOVELY WOMAN. MUST BE YOUR KABUKI LINEAGE
HELLO, FATHER!
...
I FOUND THIS IN YOUR DRAWER!
A SERVANT OF THE LORD SHOULDN'T GO AROUND WAVING GUNS AT PEOPLE, NOW!


I HAVE TO MEET SOMEONE.
NO! DON'T SET FOOT OUTSIDE THIS ROOM!
AND IF I INSIST ON LEAVING? WILL YOU SHOOT ME?
THAT'S RIGHT. I WON'T HESITATE TO SHOOT YOU THIS TIME!
NAUGHTY, NAUGHTY PRIEST!
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO SAVE THE LOST LAMBS. ESPECIALLY THE SINFUL ONES!
STOP!
YOU WOULDN'T DARE!
DON'T GO!
BLAM
BLAM

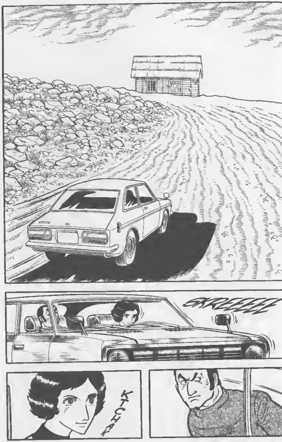

UGH!
A DIRECT HIT!
YOU KILLED HER!
I WAS JUST TRYING TO SCARE YOU!
BUT THIS WOMAN IS DEAD.

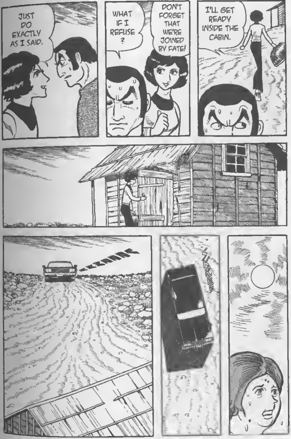

NOW YOU'VE DONE IT, FATHER!
NOW YOU AND I REALLY ARE BOUND BY FATE, JUST AS YOU WISHED!
AAAGH!

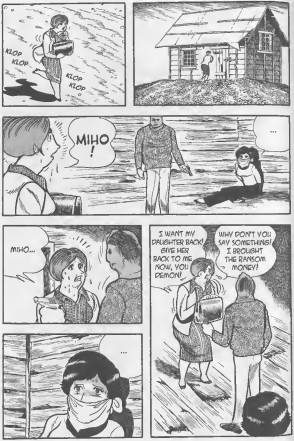

TIME TO GO PICK UP THE RANSOM MONEY!
WOBBLE
...
HA HA! ARE YOU CARSICK?
A MONSTER LIKE YOU WOULD NEVER UNDERSTAND!!

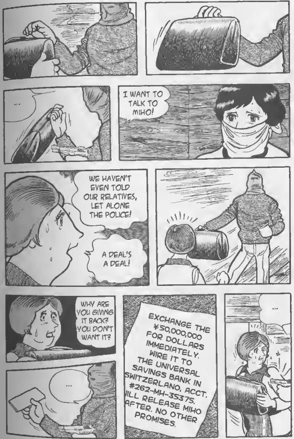
CHAPTER FOUR

TRIANGLE

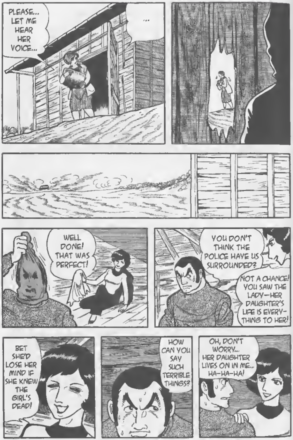

SKREEEEL
KTCHAK

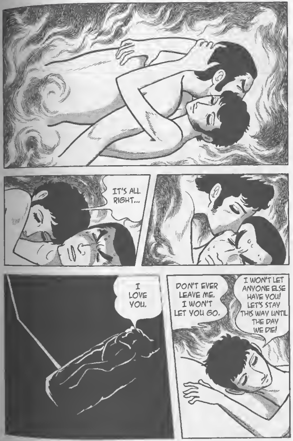

JUST DO EXACTLY AS I SAID.
WHAT IF I REFUSE?
DON'T FORGET THAT WE'RE JOINED BY FATE!
I'LL GET READY INSIDE THE CABIN.

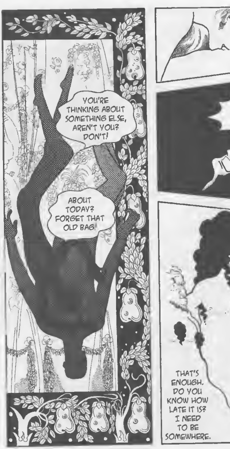

KLOP
KLOP
KLOP
KLOP
MIHO!
...
MIHO...
I WANT MY DAUGHTER BACK! GIVE HER BACK TO ME NOW, YOU DEMON!
WHY DON'T YOU SAY SOMETHING! I BROUGHT THE RANSOM MONEY!
...

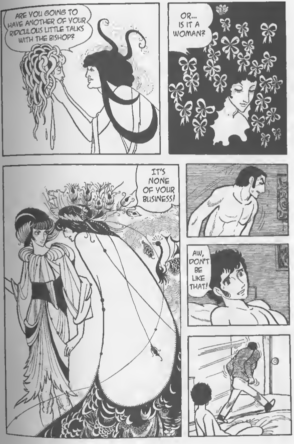

...
I WANT TO TALK TO MIHO!
WE HAVEN'T EVEN TOLD OUR RELATIVES, LET ALONE THE POLICE!
A DEAL'S A DEAL!
WHY ARE YOU GIVING IT BACK? YOU DON'T WANT IT?
...
...

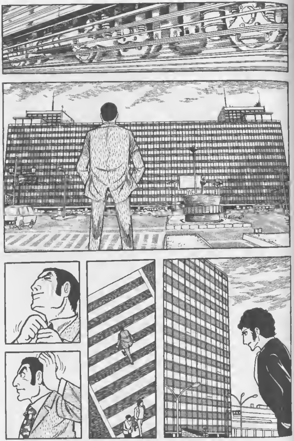
EXCHANGE THE ¥50,000,000 FOR DOLLARS IMMEDIATELY. WIRE IT TO THE UNIVERSAL SAVINGS BANK IN SWITZERLAND, ACCT. #262-MH-35375. WILL RELEASE MIHO AFTER. NO OTHER PROMISES.

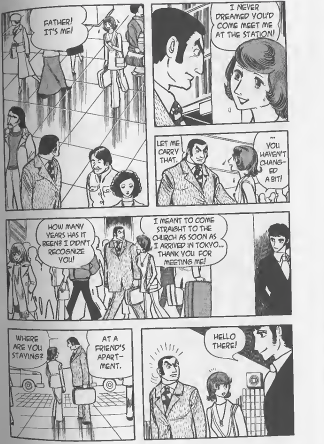

PLEASE... LET ME HEAR HER VOICE...
...
WELL DONE! THAT WAS PERFECT!
YOU DON'T THINK THE POLICE HAVE US SURROUNDED?
NOT A CHANCE! YOU SAW THE LADY—HER DAUGHTER'S LIFE IS EVERYTHING TO HER!
BET SHE'D LOSE HER MIND IF SHE KNEW THE GIRL'S DEAD!
HOW CAN YOU SAY SUCH TERRIBLE THINGS?
OH, DON'T WORRY... HER DAUGHTER LIVES ON IN ME... HA-HA-HA!

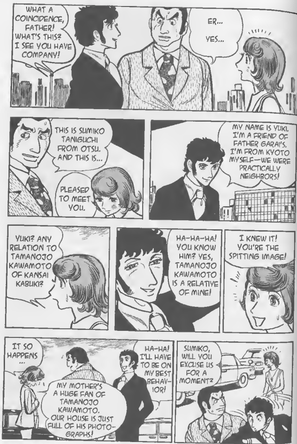

IT'S ALL RIGHT...
I LOVE YOU.
DON'T EVER LEAVE ME. I WON'T LET YOU GO.
I WON'T LET ANYONE ELSE HAVE YOU! LET'S STAY THIS WAY UNTIL THE DAY WE DIE!

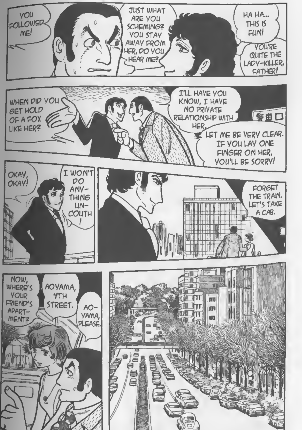

YOU'RE THINKING ABOUT SOMETHING ELSE, AREN'T YOU? DON'T!
ABOUT TODAY? FORGET THAT OLD BAG!
HEY! DON'T BITE!
I KNOW... YOU'RE GOING TO SEE SOMEONE, AREN'T YOU?
THAT'S ENOUGH. DO YOU KNOW HOW LATE IT IS? I NEED TO BE SOMEWHERE.

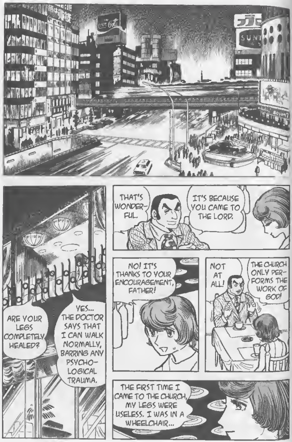

ARE YOU GOING TO HAVE ANOTHER OF YOUR RIDICULOUS LITTLE TALKS WITH THE BISHOP?
OR... IS IT A WOMAN?
IT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS!
AW, DON'T BE LIKE THAT!

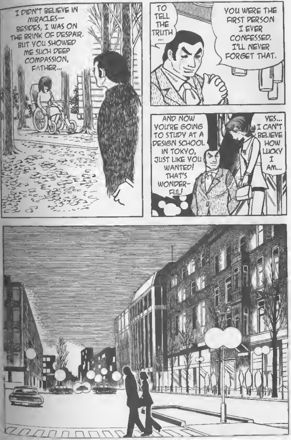


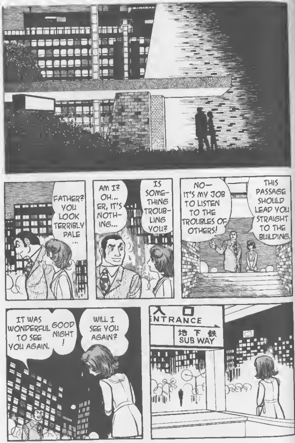

FATHER! IT'S ME!
I NEVER DREAMED YOU'D COME MEET ME AT THE STATION!
LET ME CARRY THAT.
... YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED A BIT!
HOW MANY YEARS HAS IT BEEN? I DIDN'T RECOGNIZE YOU!
I MEANT TO COME STRAIGHT TO THE CHURCH AS SOON AS I ARRIVED IN TOKYO... THANK YOU FOR MEETING ME!
WHERE ARE YOU STAYING?
AT A FRIEND'S APARTMENT.
HELLO THERE!

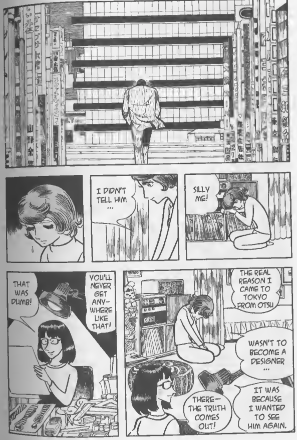

WHAT A COINCIDENCE, FATHER! WHAT'S THIS? I SEE YOU HAVE COMPANY!
ER...
YES...
THIS IS SUMIKO TANIGUCHI FROM OTSU. AND THIS IS...
PLEASED TO MEET YOU.
MY NAME IS YUKI. I'M A FRIEND OF FATHER GARAI'S. I'M FROM KYOTO MYSELF—WE WERE PRACTICALLY NEIGHBORS!
YUKI? ANY RELATION TO TAMANOJO KAWAMOTO OF KANSAI KABUKI?
HA-HA-HA! YOU KNOW HIM? YES, TAMANOJO KAWAMOTO IS A RELATIVE OF MINE!
I KNEW IT! YOU'RE THE SPITTING IMAGE!
IT SO HAPPENS ...
MY MOTHER'S A HUGE FAN OF TAMANOJO KAWAMOTO. OUR HOUSE IS JUST FULL OF HIS PHOTOGRAPHS!
HA-HA! I'LL HAVE TO BE ON MY BEST BEHAVIOR!
SUMIKO, WILL YOU EXCUSE US FOR A MOMENT?

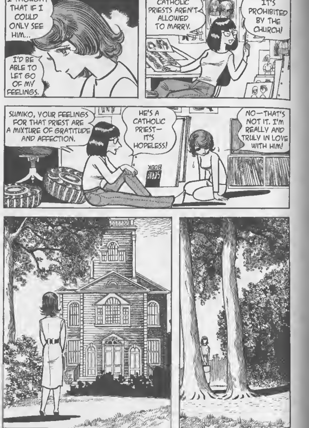

YOU FOLLOWED ME!
JUST WHAT ARE YOU SCHEMING? YOU STAY AWAY FROM HER, DO YOU HEAR ME?
HA HA... THIS IS FUN!
YOU'RE QUITE THE LADY-KILLER, FATHER!
WHEN DID YOU GET HOLD OF A FOX LIKE HER?
I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW, I HAVE NO PRIVATE RELATIONSHIP WITH HER.
乗車口
LET ME BE VERY CLEAR. IF YOU LAY ONE FINGER ON HER, YOU'LL BE SORRY!
OKAY, OKAY!
I WON'T DO ANYTHING UNCOUTH!
FORGET THE TRAIN. LET'S TAKE A CAB.
NOW, WHERE'S YOUR FRIEND'S APARTMENT?
AOYAMA, 4TH STREET.
AOYAMA, PLEASE.

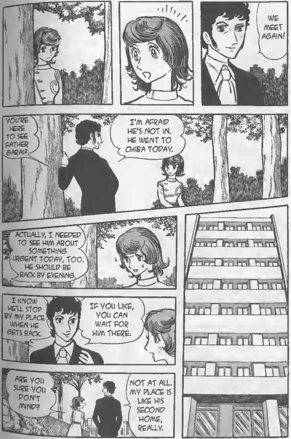

ARE YOUR LEGS COMPLETELY HEALED?
YES... THE DOCTOR SAYS THAT I CAN WALK NORMALLY, BARRING ANY PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA.
THAT'S WONDERFUL.
IT'S BECAUSE YOU CAME TO THE LORD.
NO! IT'S THANKS TO YOUR ENCOURAGEMENT, FATHER!
NOT AT ALL!
THE CHURCH ONLY PERFORMS THE WORK OF GOD!
THE FIRST TIME I CAME TO THE CHURCH, MY LEGS WERE USELESS. I WAS IN A WHEELCHAIR...

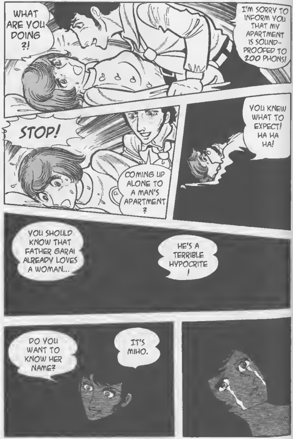

I DIDN'T BELIEVE IN MIRACLES— BESIDES, I WAS ON THE BRINK OF DESPAIR. BUT YOU SHOWED ME SUCH DEEP COMPASSION, FATHER...
TO TELL THE TRUTH...
YOU WERE THE FIRST PERSON I EVER CONFESSED. I'LL NEVER FORGET THAT.
AND NOW YOU'RE GOING TO STUDY AT A DESIGN SCHOOL IN TOKYO, JUST LIKE YOU WANTED! THAT'S WONDERFUL!
YES... I CAN'T BELIEVE HOW LUCKY I AM...


FATHER? YOU LOOK TERRIBLY PALE ...
AM I? OH... ER, IT'S NOTHING...
IS SOMETHING TROUBLING YOU?
NO— IT'S MY JOB TO LISTEN TO THE TROUBLES OF OTHERS!
THIS PASSAGE SHOULD LEAD YOU STRAIGHT TO THE BUILDING.
IT WAS WONDERFUL TO SEE YOU AGAIN.
GOOD NIGHT!
WILL I SEE YOU AGAIN?
入口 ENTRANCE
地下鉄 SUB WAY


I DIDN'T TELL HIM ...
SILLY ME!
THAT WAS DUMB!
YOU'LL NEVER GET ANYWHERE LIKE THAT!
THE REAL REASON I CAME TO TOKYO FROM OTSU
WASN'T TO BECOME A DESIGNER ...
IT WAS BECAUSE I WANTED TO SEE HIM AGAIN.
THERE— THE TRUTH COMES OUT!

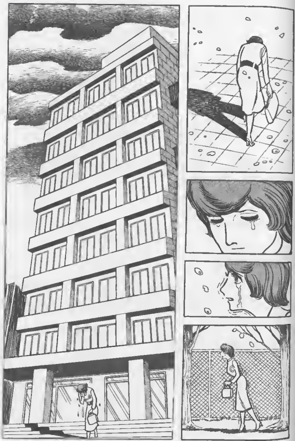

I THOUGHT THAT IF I COULD ONLY SEE HIM...
I'D BE ABLE TO LET GO OF MY FEELINGS.
CATHOLIC PRIESTS AREN'T ALLOWED TO MARRY.
IT'S PROHIBITED BY THE CHURCH!
SUMIKO, YOUR FEELINGS FOR THAT PRIEST ARE A MIXTURE OF GRATITUDE AND AFFECTION.
HE'S A CATHOLIC PRIEST— IT'S HOPELESS!
NO—THAT'S NOT IT. I'M REALLY AND TRULY IN LOVE WITH HIM!
BOOK

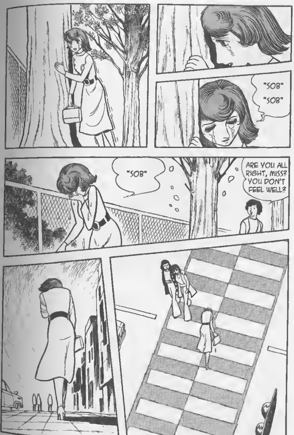

WE MEET AGAIN!
YOU'RE HERE TO SEE FATHER GARAI?
I'M AFRAID HE'S NOT IN. HE WENT TO CHIBA TODAY.
ACTUALLY, I NEEDED TO SEE HIM ABOUT SOMETHING URGENT TODAY, TOO. HE SHOULD BE BACK BY EVENING.
I KNOW HE'LL STOP BY MY PLACE WHEN HE GETS BACK.
IF YOU LIKE, YOU CAN WAIT FOR HIM THERE.
ARE YOU SURE YOU DON'T MIND?
NOT AT ALL. MY PLACE IS LIKE HIS SECOND HOME, REALLY.

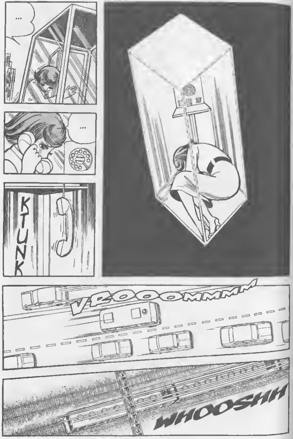

WHAT ARE YOU DOING ?!
I'M SORRY TO INFORM YOU THAT MY APARTMENT IS SOUND-PROOFED TO 200 PHONS!
STOP!
COMING UP ALONE TO A MAN'S APARTMENT ?
YOU KNEW WHAT TO EXPECT! HA HA HA!
YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT FATHER GARAI ALREADY LOVES A WOMAN...
HE'S A TERRIBLE HYPOCRITE !
DO YOU WANT TO KNOW HER NAME?
IT'S MIHO.

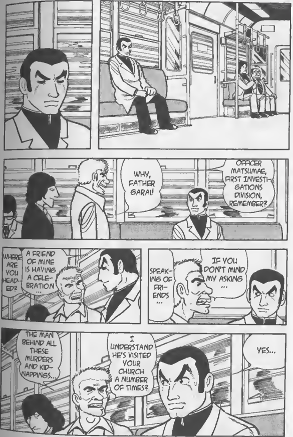
CHAPTER FIVE

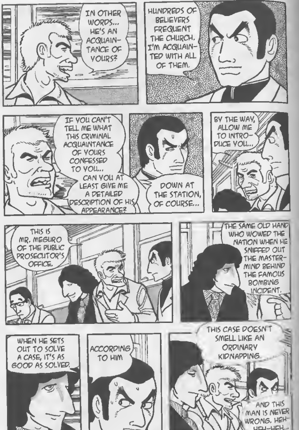
REVENGE

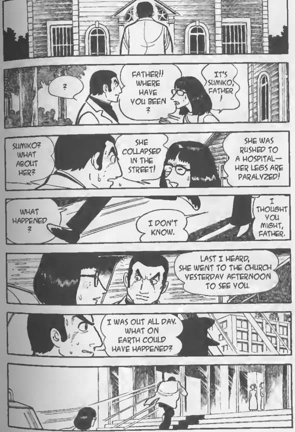


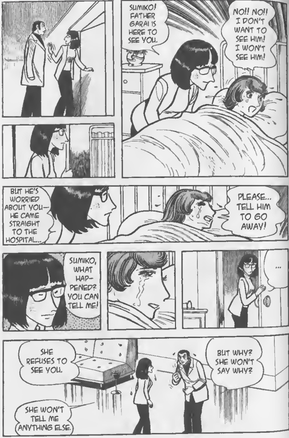

"SOB"
"SOB"
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, MISS? YOU DON'T FEEL WELL?
"SOB"

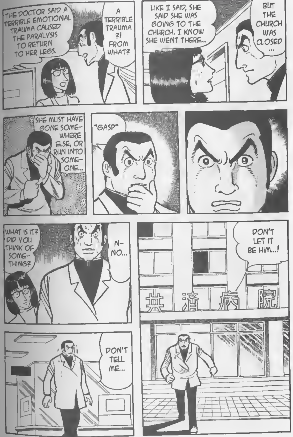

...
...
KTUNK
VROOOOMMMM
WHOOSHH

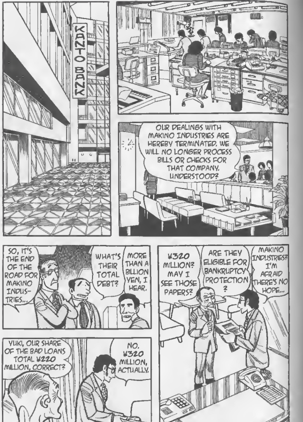

WHY, FATHER GARAI!
OFFICER MATSUMAE, FIRST INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION, REMEMBER?
WHERE ARE YOU HEADED?
A FRIEND OF MINE IS HAVING A CELEBRATION...
SPEAKING OF FRIENDS...
IF YOU DON'T MIND MY ASKING...
THE MAN BEHIND ALL THESE MURDERS AND KIDNAPPINGS...
I UNDERSTAND HE'S VISITED YOUR CHURCH A NUMBER OF TIMES?
YES...

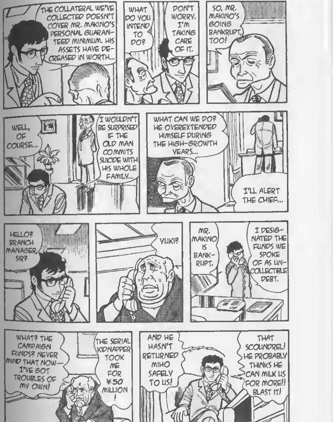

IN OTHER WORDS... HE'S AN ACQUAINTANCE OF YOURS?
HUNDREDS OF BELIEVERS FREQUENT THE CHURCH. I'M ACQUAINTED WITH ALL OF THEM.
IF YOU CAN'T TELL ME WHAT THIS CRIMINAL ACQUAINTANCE OF YOURS CONFESSED TO YOU... CAN YOU AT LEAST GIVE ME A DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF HIS APPEARANCE?
DOWN AT THE STATION, OF COURSE...
BY THE WAY, ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE YOU...
THIS IS MR. MEGURO OF THE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE.
THE SAME OLD HAND WHO WOWED THE NATION WHEN HE SNIFFED OUT THE MASTERMIND BEHIND THE FAMOUS BOMBING INCIDENT.
WHEN HE SETS OUT TO SOLVE A CASE, IT'S AS GOOD AS SOLVED.
ACCORDING TO HIM
THIS CASE DOESN'T SMELL LIKE AN ORDINARY KIDNAPPING.
AND THIS MAN IS NEVER WRONG. HEH HEH-HEH...

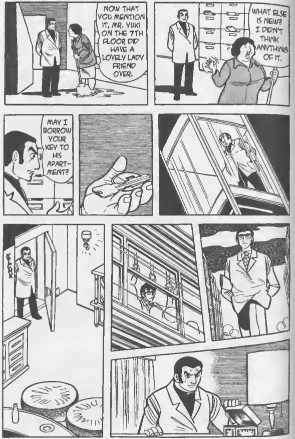

?
FATHER!! WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?
IT'S SUMIKO, FATHER!
SUMIKO? WHAT ABOUT HER?
SHE COLLAPSED IN THE STREET!
SHE WAS RUSHED TO A HOSPITAL—HER LEGS ARE PARALYZED!
WHAT HAPPENED?
I DON'T KNOW.
I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT, FATHER.
LAST I HEARD, SHE WENT TO THE CHURCH YESTERDAY AFTERNOON TO SEE YOU.
I WAS OUT ALL DAY. WHAT ON EARTH COULD HAVE HAPPENED?

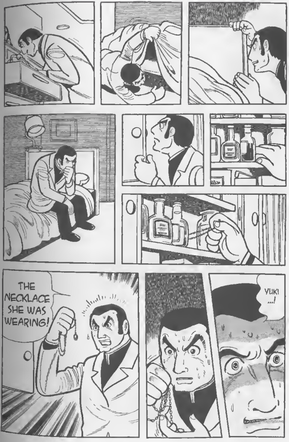

SUMIKO! FATHER GARAI IS HERE TO SEE YOU.
NO!! NO!! I DON'T WANT TO SEE HIM! I WON'T SEE HIM!
BUT HE'S WORRIED ABOUT YOU—HE CAME STRAIGHT TO THE HOSPITAL...
PLEASE... TELL HIM TO GO AWAY!
SUMIKO, WHAT HAPPENED? YOU CAN TELL ME!
...
SHE REFUSES TO SEE YOU.
SHE WON'T TELL ME ANYTHING ELSE.
BUT WHY? SHE WON'T SAY WHY?

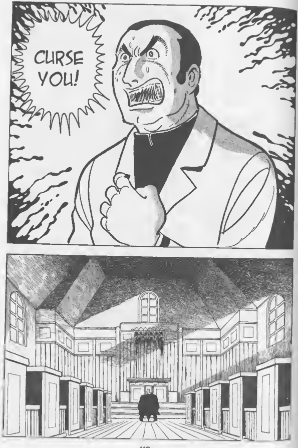

THE DOCTOR SAID A TERRIBLE EMOTIONAL TRAUMA CAUSED THE PARALYSIS TO RETURN TO HER LEGS.
A TERRIBLE TRAUMA?! FROM WHAT?
LIKE I SAID, SHE SAID SHE WAS GOING TO THE CHURCH. I KNOW SHE WENT THERE...
BUT THE CHURCH WAS CLOSED...
SHE MUST HAVE GONE SOMEWHERE ELSE, OR RUN INTO SOMEONE...
"GASP"
WHAT IS IT? DID YOU THINK OF SOMETHING?
N-NO...
DON'T LET IT BE HIM...!
共済病院
DON'T TELL ME...

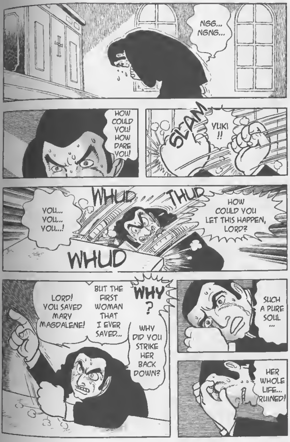

KANTO BANK
OUR DEALINGS WITH MAKINO INDUSTRIES ARE HEREBY TERMINATED. WE WILL NO LONGER PROCESS BILLS OR CHECKS FOR THAT COMPANY. UNDERSTOOD?
SO, IT'S THE END OF THE ROAD FOR MAKINO INDUSTRIES...
WHAT'S THEIR TOTAL DEBT?
MORE THAN A BILLION YEN, I HEAR.
¥320 MILLION? MAY I SEE THOSE PAPERS?
ARE THEY ELIGIBLE FOR BANKRUPTCY PROTECTION?
MAKINO INDUSTRIES? I'M AFRAID THERE'S NO HOPE...
YUKI, OUR SHARE OF THE BAD LOANS TOTAL ¥220 MILLION, CORRECT?
NO. ¥320 MILLION, ACTUALLY.

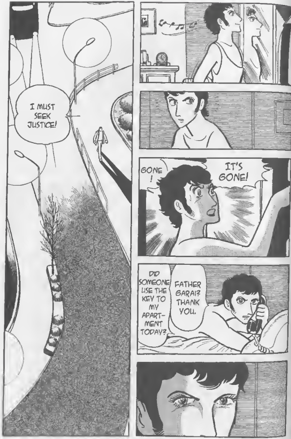

THE COLLATERAL WE'VE COLLECTED DOESN'T COVER MR. MAKINO'S PERSONAL GUARANTEED MINIMUM. HIS ASSETS HAVE DECREASED IN WORTH...
WHAT DO YOU INTEND TO DO?
DON'T WORRY. I'M TAKING CARE OF IT.
SO, MR. MAKINO'S GOING BANKRUPT, TOO!
WELL, OF COURSE...
I WOULDN'T BE SURPRISED IF THE OLD MAN COMMITS SUICIDE WITH HIS WHOLE FAMILY...
WHAT CAN WE DO? HE OVEREXTENDED HIMSELF DURING THE HIGH-GROWTH YEARS...
I'LL ALERT THE CHIEF...
HELLO? BRANCH MANAGER, SIR?
YUKI?
MR. MAKINO IS BANKRUPT.
I DESIGNATED THE FUNDS WE SPOKE OF AS UNCOLLECTIBLE DEBT.
WHAT? THE CAMPAIGN FUNDS? NEVER MIND THAT NOW— I'VE GOT TROUBLES OF MY OWN!
THE SERIAL KIDNAPPER TOOK ME FOR ¥50 MILLION!
AND HE HASN'T RETURNED MIHO SAFELY TO US!
THAT SCOUNDREL! HE PROBABLY THINKS HE CAN MILK US FOR MORE!! BLAST IT!

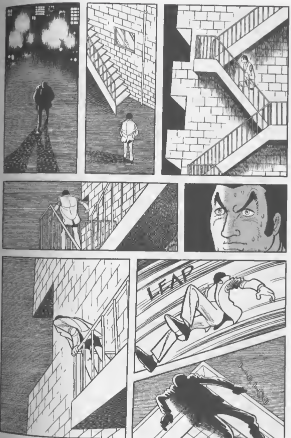

NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, MR. YUKI ON THE 7TH FLOOR DID HAVE A LOVELY LADY FRIEND OVER.
WHAT ELSE IS NEW? I DIDN'T THINK ANYTHING OF IT.
MAY I BORROW YOUR KEY TO HIS APARTMENT?
KLICK

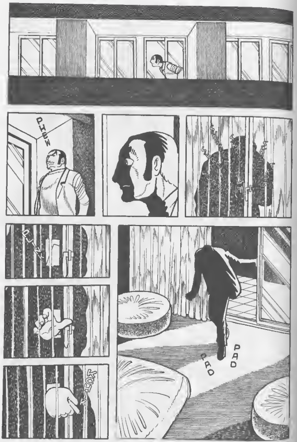

THE NECKLACE SHE WAS WEARING!
YUKI ...!

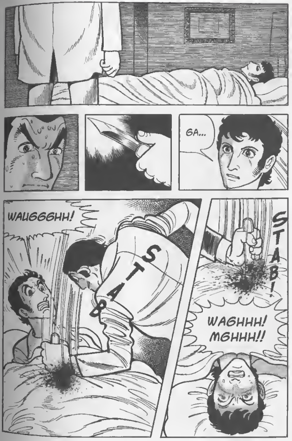

CURSE YOU!

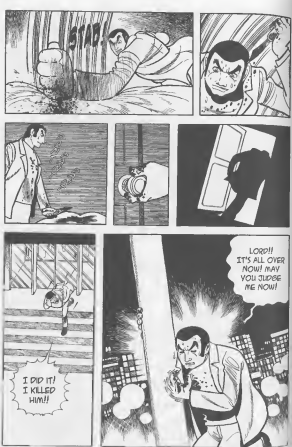

NGG... NGNG...
HOW COULD YOU! HOW DARE YOU!
SLAM
YUKI !!
YOU... YOU... YOU...!
WHUD
THUD
HOW COULD YOU LET THIS HAPPEN, LORD?
WHUD
LORD! YOU SAVED MARY MAGDALENE!
BUT THE FIRST WOMAN THAT I EVER SAVED...
WHY ?
WHY DID YOU STRIKE HER BACK DOWN?
SUCH A PURE SOUL ...
HER WHOLE LIFE... RUINED!


I MUST SEEK JUSTICE!
GONE!
IT'S GONE!
DID SOMEONE USE THE KEY TO MY APARTMENT TODAY?
FATHER GARAI? THANK YOU.


LEAP

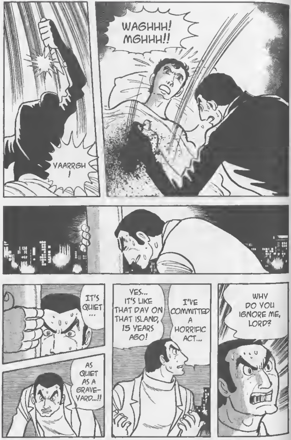

PHEW
PLINK
KLICK
PAD
PAD

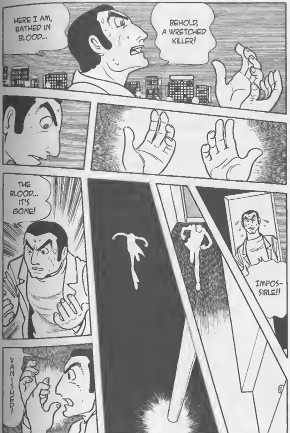

GA...
WAUGGGHH!
STAB
STAB!
WAGHHH!
MGHHH!!

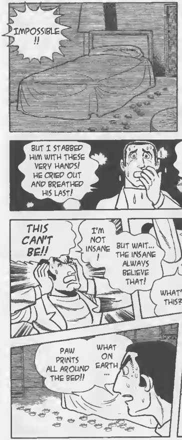

STAB!
PANT PANT PANT
I DID IT! I KILLED HIM!!
LORD!! IT'S ALL OVER NOW! MAY YOU JUDGE ME NOW!

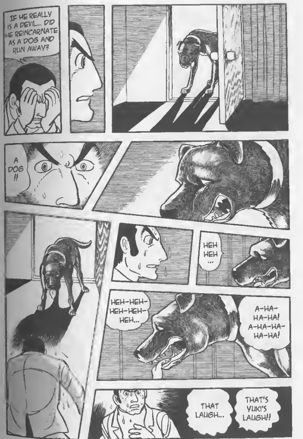
CHAPTER SIX

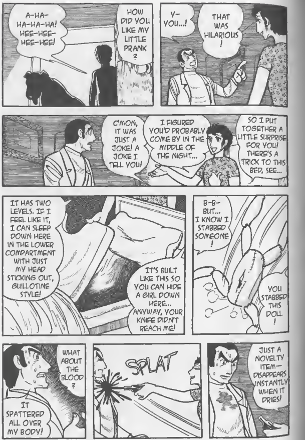
THE DEVIL INCARNATE

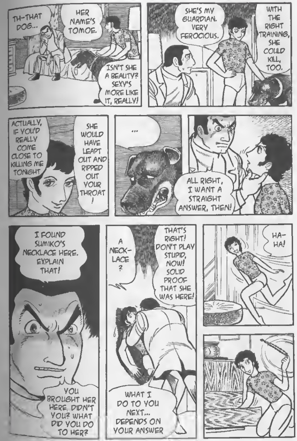

YAARRGH!
WAGHHH! MGHHH!!
IT'S QUIET...
AS QUIET AS A GRAVEYARD...!!
YES... IT'S LIKE THAT DAY ON THAT ISLAND, 15 YEARS AGO!
I'VE COMMITTED A HORRIFIC ACT...
WHY DO YOU IGNORE ME, LORD?

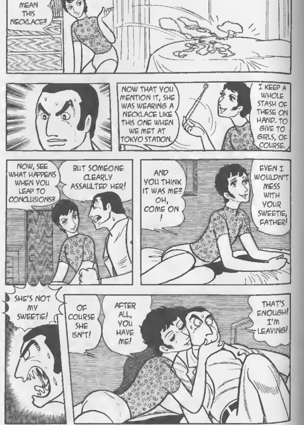

HERE I AM, BATHED IN BLOOD...
BEHOLD, A WRETCHED KILLER!
THE BLOOD... IT'S GONE!
IMPOSSIBLE!!
VANISHED!

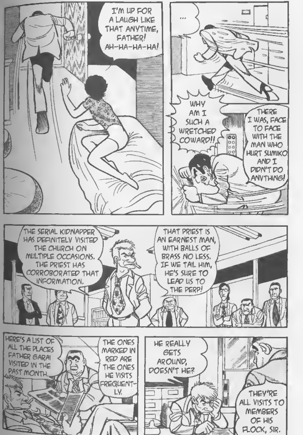

IMPOSSIBLE!!
NO SLASHES... NOT A DROP OF BLOOD... AND THE BODY'S GONE!
BUT I STABBED HIM WITH THESE VERY HANDS! HE CRIED OUT AND BREATHED HIS LAST!
I MADE SURE OF IT WITH MY OWN EYES BEFORE I LEFT THE ROOM!
AM I HALLUCINATING? HOW...
THIS CAN'T BE!!
I'M NOT INSANE!
BUT WAIT... THE INSANE ALWAYS BELIEVE THAT!
WHAT'S THIS?
PAW PRINTS?
PAW PRINTS ALL AROUND THE BED!!
WHAT ON EARTH...
I DON'T UNDERSTAND!!
I DON'T UNDERSTAND AT ALL!
WHAT HAPPENED TO YUKI'S BODY?

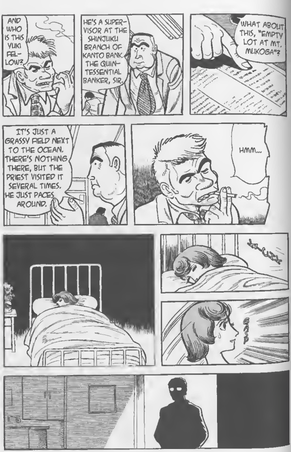

IF HE REALLY IS A DEVIL... DID HE REINCARNATE AS A DOG AND RUN AWAY?
A DOG!!
HEH HEH ...
HEH-HEH-HEH-HEH-HEH...
A-HA-HA! A-HA-HA-HA-HA!
THAT LAUGH...
THAT'S YUKI'S LAUGH!!

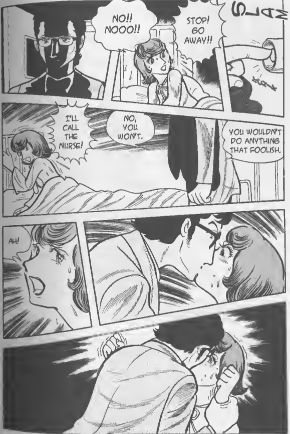

A-HA-HA-HA! HEE-HEE-HEE-HEE!
HOW DID YOU LIKE MY LITTLE PRANK?
Y-YOU...!
THAT WAS HILARIOUS!
C'MON, IT WAS JUST A JOKE! A JOKE I TELL YOU!
I FIGURED YOU'D PROBABLY COME BY IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT...
SO I PUT TOGETHER A LITTLE SURPRISE FOR YOU! THERE'S A TRICK TO THIS BED, SEE...
IT HAS TWO LEVELS. IF I FEEL LIKE IT, I CAN SLEEP DOWN HERE IN THE LOWER COMPARTMENT WITH JUST MY HEAD STICKING OUT, GUILLOTINE STYLE!
IT'S BUILT LIKE THIS SO YOU CAN HIDE A GIRL DOWN HERE... ANYWAY, YOUR KNIFE DIDN'T REACH ME!
B-B-BUT... I KNOW I STABBED SOMEONE!
YOU STABBED THIS DOLL!
WHAT ABOUT THE BLOOD?
IT SPATTERED ALL OVER MY BODY!
SPLAT
JUST A NOVELTY ITEM—DISAPPEARS INSTANTLY WHEN IT DRIES!

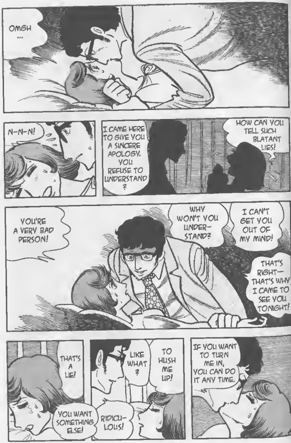

TH-THAT DOG...
HER NAME'S TOMOE.
ISN'T SHE A BEAUTY? SEXY'S MORE LIKE IT, REALLY!
SHE'S MY GUARDIAN. VERY FEROCIOUS.
WITH THE RIGHT TRAINING, SHE COULD KILL, TOO.
ACTUALLY, IF YOU'D REALLY COME CLOSE TO KILLING ME TONIGHT
SHE WOULD HAVE LEAPT OUT AND RIPPED OUT YOUR THROAT!
...
ALL RIGHT, I WANT A STRAIGHT ANSWER, THEN!
I FOUND SUMIKO'S NECKLACE HERE. EXPLAIN THAT!
YOU BROUGHT HER HERE, DIDN'T YOU? WHAT DID YOU DO TO HER?
A NECKLACE?
THAT'S RIGHT! DON'T PLAY STUPID, NOW! SOLID PROOF THAT SHE WAS HERE!
WHAT I DO TO YOU NEXT... DEPENDS ON YOUR ANSWER
HA-HA!

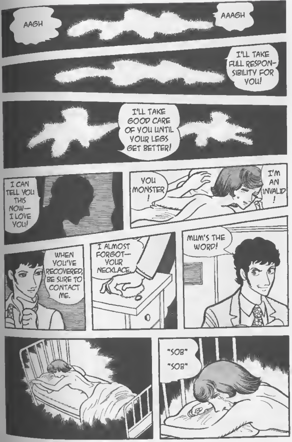

YOU MEAN THIS NECKLACE?
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, SHE WAS WEARING A NECKLACE LIKE THIS ONE WHEN WE MET AT TOKYO STATION.
I KEEP A WHOLE STASH OF THESE ON HAND. TO GIVE TO GIRLS, OF COURSE.
NOW, SEE WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU LEAP TO CONCLUSIONS?
BUT SOMEONE CLEARLY ASSAULTED HER!
AND YOU THINK IT WAS ME? OH, COME ON!
EVEN I WOULDN'T MESS WITH YOUR SWEETIE, FATHER!
SHE'S NOT MY SWEETIE!
OF COURSE SHE ISN'T!
AFTER ALL, YOU HAVE ME!
THAT'S ENOUGH! I'M LEAVING!

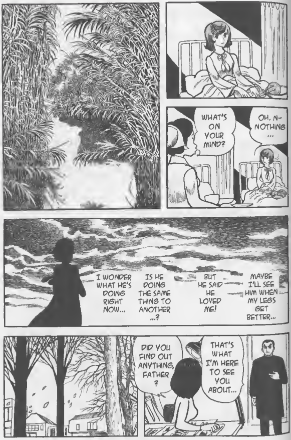

I'M UP FOR A LAUGH LIKE THAT ANYTIME, FATHER! AH-HA-HA-HA!
...
WHY AM I SUCH A WRETCHED COWARD!!
THERE I WAS, FACE TO FACE WITH THE MAN WHO HURT SUMIKO AND I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING!
THE SERIAL KIDNAPPER HAS DEFINITELY VISITED THE CHURCH ON MULTIPLE OCCASIONS. THE PRIEST HAS CORROBORATED THAT INFORMATION.
THAT PRIEST IS AN EARNEST MAN, WITH BALLS OF BRASS NO LESS. IF WE TAIL HIM, HE'S SURE TO LEAD US TO THE PERP!
HERE'S A LIST OF ALL THE PLACES FATHER GARAI VISITED IN THE PAST MONTH.
THE ONES MARKED IN RED ARE THE ONES HE VISITS FREQUENTLY.
HE REALLY GETS AROUND, DOESN'T HE?
THEY'RE ALL VISITS TO MEMBERS OF HIS FLOCK, SIR.

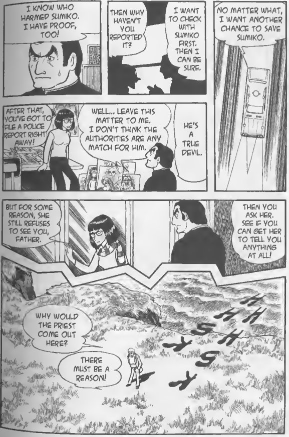

AND WHO IS THIS YUKI FELLOW?
HE'S A SUPERVISOR AT THE SHINJUKU BRANCH OF KANTO BANK. THE QUINTESSENTIAL BANKER, SIR.
WHAT ABOUT THIS, "EMPTY LOT AT MT. MUKOGA"?
IT'S JUST A GRASSY FIELD NEXT TO THE OCEAN. THERE'S NOTHING THERE, BUT THE PRIEST VISITED IT SEVERAL TIMES. HE JUST PACES AROUND.
HMM...
GASP

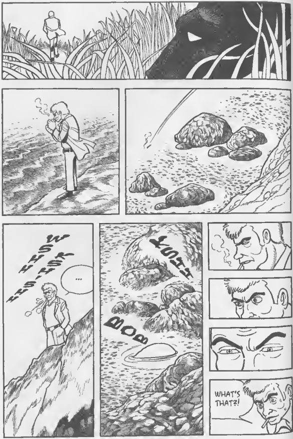

NO!! NOOO!!
STOP! GO AWAY!!
I'LL CALL THE NURSE!
NO, YOU WON'T.
YOU WOULDN'T DO ANYTHING THAT FOOLISH.
AH!

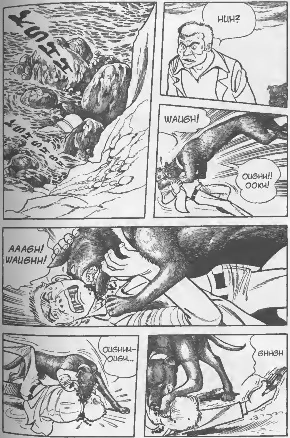

OMGH ...
N-N-N!
I CAME HERE TO GIVE YOU A SINCERE APOLOGY. YOU REFUSE TO UNDERSTAND?
HOW CAN YOU TELL SUCH BLATANT LIES!
YOU'RE A VERY BAD PERSON!
WHY WON'T YOU UNDERSTAND?
I CAN'T GET YOU OUT OF MY MIND!
THAT'S RIGHT—THAT'S WHY I CAME TO SEE YOU TONIGHT!
THAT'S A LIE!
YOU WANT SOMETHING ELSE!
LIKE WHAT?
RIDICULOUS!
TO HUSH ME UP!
IF YOU WANT TO TURN ME IN, YOU CAN DO IT ANY TIME.

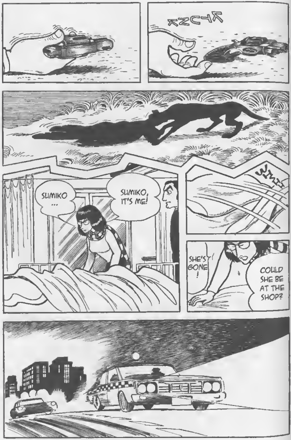

AAGH
AAAGH
I'LL TAKE FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOU!
I'LL TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOU UNTIL YOUR LEGS GET BETTER!
I CAN TELL YOU THIS NOW—I LOVE YOU!
YOU MONSTER!
I'M AN INVALID!
WHEN YOU'VE RECOVERED, BE SURE TO CONTACT ME.
I ALMOST FORGOT—YOUR NECKLACE.
MUM'S THE WORD!
"SOB"
"SOB"

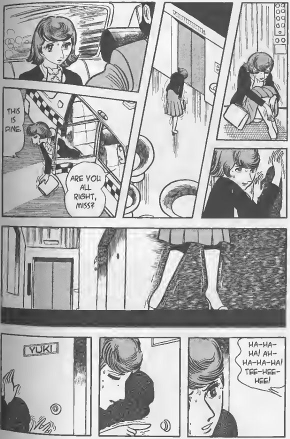

WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?
OH, N-NOTHING ...
I WONDER WHAT HE'S DOING RIGHT NOW...
IS HE DOING THE SAME THING TO ANOTHER ...?
BUT HE SAID HE LOVED ME!
MAYBE I'LL SEE HIM WHEN MY LEGS GET BETTER...
DID YOU FIND OUT ANYTHING, FATHER?
THAT'S WHAT I'M HERE TO SEE YOU ABOUT...

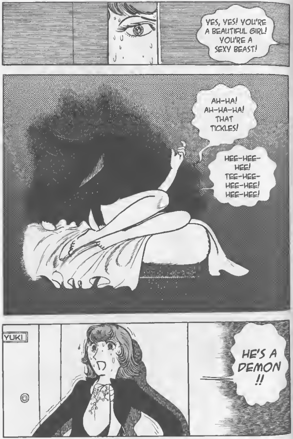

I KNOW WHO HARMED SUMIKO. I HAVE PROOF, TOO!
THEN WHY HAVEN'T YOU REPORTED IT?
I WANT TO CHECK WITH SUMIKO FIRST. THEN I CAN BE SURE.
NO MATTER WHAT, I WANT ANOTHER CHANCE TO SAVE SUMIKO.
AFTER THAT, YOU'VE GOT TO FILE A POLICE REPORT RIGHT AWAY!
WELL... LEAVE THIS MATTER TO ME. I DON'T THINK THE AUTHORITIES ARE ANY MATCH FOR HIM.
HE'S A TRUE DEVIL.
BUT FOR SOME REASON, SHE STILL REFUSES TO SEE YOU, FATHER.
THEN YOU ASK HER. SEE IF YOU CAN GET HER TO TELL YOU ANYTHING AT ALL!
WHY WOULD THE PRIEST COME OUT HERE?
THERE MUST BE A REASON!


WSHH
FSH-SHH
...
FUSH
BOB
WHAT'S THAT?!


FUSH
FUSHUSH...
HUH?
WAUGH!
OUGHH!! OOKH!
AAAGH! WAUGHH!
OUGHHH-OUGH...
GHHGH

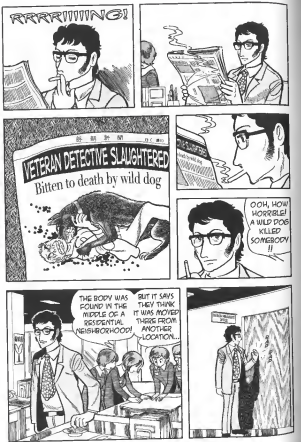

SUMIKO ...
SUMIKO, IT'S ME!
WHIII
SHE'S GONE!
COULD SHE BE AT THE SHOP?

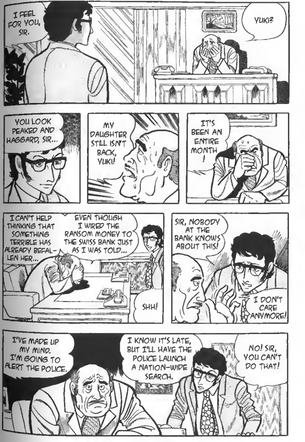

THIS IS FINE.
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, MISS?
YUKI
HA-HA-HA! AH-HA-HA-HA! TEE-HEE-HEE!

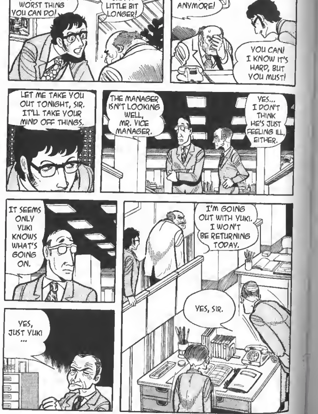

YES, YES! YOU'RE A BEAUTIFUL GIRL! YOU'RE A SEXY BEAST!
AH-HA! AH-HA-HA! THAT TICKLES!
HEE-HEE-HEE! TEE-HEE-HEE-HEE! HEE-HEE!
YUKI
HE'S A DEMON !!

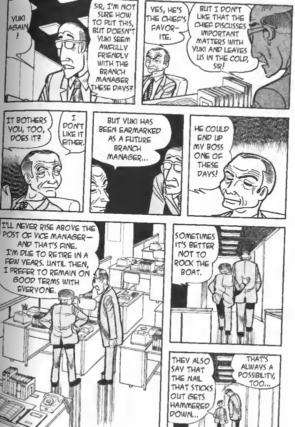
CHAPTER SEVEN

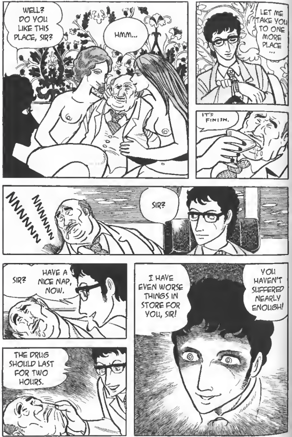
INTO THE LION'S DEN

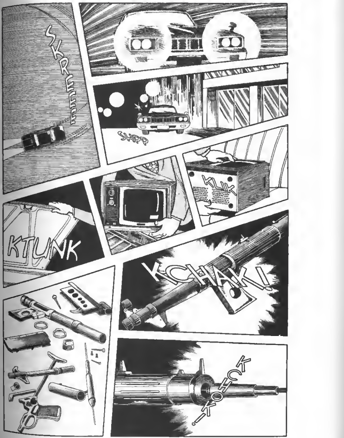

RRRRIIIIING!
毎朝新聞
VETERAN DETECTIVE SLAUGHTERED
Bitten to death by wild dog
TIVE SLAUGHTERED
death by wild dog
OOH, HOW HORRIBLE! A WILD DOG KILLED SOMEBODY!!
THE BODY WAS FOUND IN THE MIDDLE OF A RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD!
BUT IT SAYS THEY THINK IT WAS MOVED THERE FROM ANOTHER LOCATION...

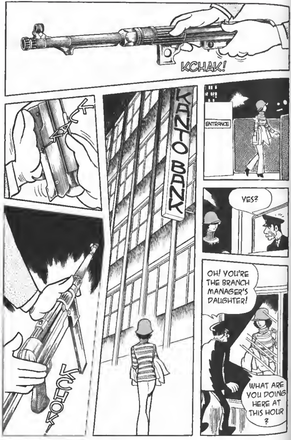

I FEEL FOR YOU, SIR.
YUKI?
YOU LOOK PEAKED AND HAGGARD, SIR...
MY DAUGHTER STILL ISN'T BACK, YUKI!
IT'S BEEN AN ENTIRE MONTH!
I CAN'T HELP THINKING THAT SOMETHING TERRIBLE HAS ALREADY BEFALLEN HER...
EVEN THOUGH I WIRED THE RANSOM MONEY TO THE SWISS BANK JUST AS I WAS TOLD...
SHH!
SIR, NOBODY AT THE BANK KNOWS ABOUT THIS!
I DON'T CARE ANYMORE!
I'VE MADE UP MY MIND. I'M GOING TO ALERT THE POLICE.
I KNOW IT'S LATE, BUT I'LL HAVE THE POLICE LAUNCH A NATION-WIDE SEARCH.
NO! SIR, YOU CAN'T DO THAT!

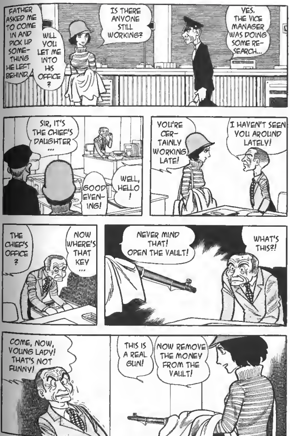

IF YOUR DAUGHTER'S STILL ALIVE, THAT'S THE WORST THING YOU CAN DO!
HANG IN THERE JUST A LITTLE BIT LONGER!
BUT I CAN'T BEAR IT ANYMORE!
YOU CAN! I KNOW IT'S HARD, BUT YOU MUST!
LET ME TAKE YOU OUT TONIGHT, SIR. IT'LL TAKE YOUR MIND OFF THINGS.
THE MANAGER ISN'T LOOKING WELL, MR. VICE MANAGER.
YES... I DON'T THINK HE'S JUST FEELING ILL, EITHER.
IT SEEMS ONLY YUKI KNOWS WHAT'S GOING ON.
YES, JUST YUKI ...
I'M GOING OUT WITH YUKI. I WON'T BE RETURNING TODAY.
YES, SIR.

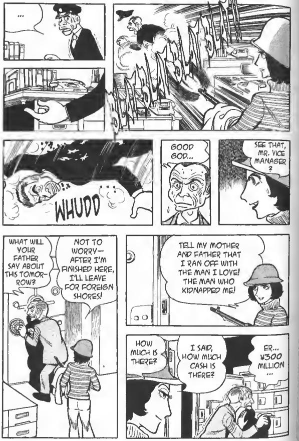

YUKI AGAIN!
SIR, I'M NOT SURE HOW TO PUT THIS, BUT DOESN'T YUKI SEEM AWFULLY FRIENDLY WITH THE BRANCH MANAGER THESE DAYS?
YES, HE'S THE CHIEF'S FAVOR-ITE.
BUT I DON'T LIKE THAT THE CHIEF DISCUSSES IMPORTANT MATTERS WITH YUKI AND LEAVES US IN THE COLD, SIR!
IT BOTHERS YOU, TOO, DOES IT?
I DON'T LIKE IT EITHER.
BUT YUKI HAS BEEN EARMARKED AS A FUTURE BRANCH MANAGER...
HE COULD END UP MY BOSS ONE OF THESE DAYS!
I'LL NEVER RISE ABOVE THE POST OF VICE MANAGER— AND THAT'S FINE. I'M DUE TO RETIRE IN A FEW YEARS. UNTIL THEN, I PREFER TO REMAIN ON GOOD TERMS WITH EVERYONE.
SOMETIMES IT'S BETTER NOT TO ROCK THE BOAT.
THEY ALSO SAY THAT THE NAIL THAT STICKS OUT GETS HAMMERED DOWN...
THAT'S ALWAYS A POSSIBILITY, TOO...

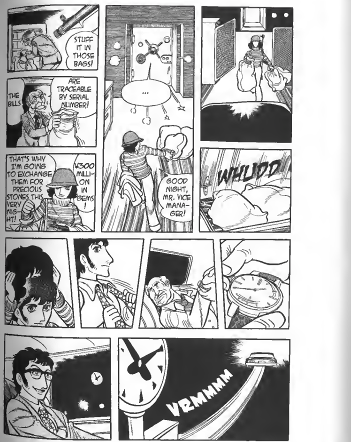

WELL? DO YOU LIKE THIS PLACE, SIR?
HMM...
LET ME TAKE YOU TO ONE MORE PLACE ...
IT'S FINISH.
NNNNNN NNNNNN
SIR?
SIR?
HAVE A NICE NAP, NOW.
THE DRUG SHOULD LAST FOR TWO HOURS.
I HAVE EVEN WORSE THINGS IN STORE FOR YOU, SIR!
YOU HAVEN'T SUFFERED NEARLY ENOUGH!

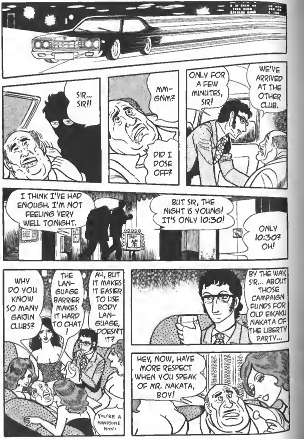

SKREEEEE
SHPP
KLIK
KTUNK
KCHAK!
KCHOK!

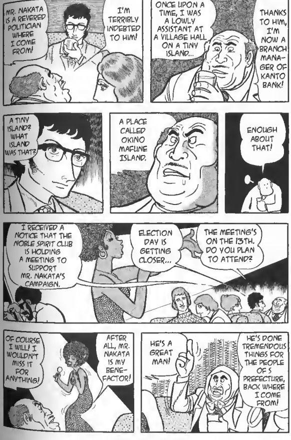

KCHAK!
KANTO BANK
ENTRANCE
YES?
OH! YOU'RE THE BRANCH MANAGER'S DAUGHTER!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE AT THIS HOUR?
KCHOK!

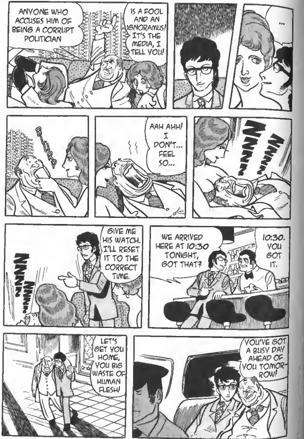

FATHER ASKED ME TO COME IN AND PICK UP SOMETHING HE LEFT BEHIND.
WILL YOU LET ME INTO HIS OFFICE?
IS THERE ANYONE STILL WORKING?
YES. THE VICE MANAGER WAS DOING SOME RESEARCH...
SIR, IT'S THE CHIEF'S DAUGHTER...
GOOD EVENING!
WELL, HELLO!
YOU'RE CERTAINLY WORKING LATE!
I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU AROUND LATELY!
THE CHIEF'S OFFICE?
NOW WHERE'S THAT KEY...
NEVER MIND THAT! OPEN THE VAULT!
WHAT'S THIS?!
COME, NOW, YOUNG LADY! THAT'S NOT FUNNY!
THIS IS A REAL GUN!
NOW REMOVE THE MONEY FROM THE VAULT!

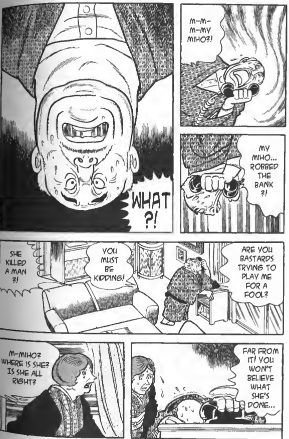

...
WHUDD
GOOD GOD...
SEE THAT, MR. VICE MANAGER?
WHAT WILL YOUR FATHER SAY ABOUT THIS TOMORROW?
NOT TO WORRY— AFTER I'M FINISHED HERE, I'LL LEAVE FOR FOREIGN SHORES!
TELL MY MOTHER AND FATHER THAT I RAN OFF WITH THE MAN I LOVE! THE MAN WHO KIDNAPPED ME!
HOW MUCH IS THERE?
I SAID, HOW MUCH CASH IS THERE?
ER... ¥300 MILLION ...

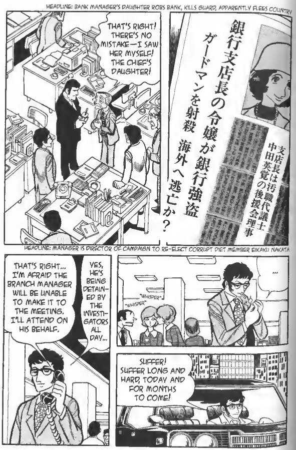

STUFF IT IN THOSE BAGS!
THE BILLS
ARE TRACEABLE BY SERIAL NUMBER!
THAT'S WHY I'M GOING TO EXCHANGE THEM FOR PRECIOUS STONES THIS VERY NIGHT!
¥300 MILLION IN GEMS!
...
GOOD NIGHT, MR. VICE MANAGER!
WHUDD
VRMMMM

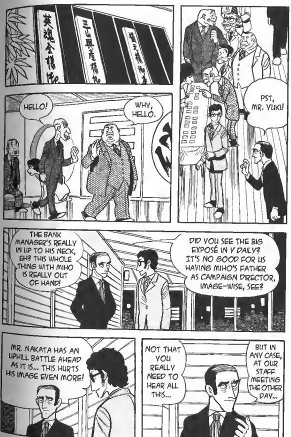

SIR... SIR!!
MM-GNM?
DID I DOSE OFF?
ONLY FOR A FEW MINUTES, SIR!
WE'VE ARRIVED AT THE OTHER CLUB.
I THINK I'VE HAD ENOUGH. I'M NOT FEELING VERY WELL TONIGHT.
BUT SIR, THE NIGHT IS YOUNG! IT'S ONLY 10:30!
ONLY 10:30? OH!
WHY DO YOU KNOW SO MANY GAIJIN CLUBS?
THE LANGUAGE BARRIER MAKES IT HARD TO CHAT!
AH, BUT IT MAKES IT EASIER TO USE BODY LANGUAGE, DOESN'T IT?
YOU'RE A HANDSOME MAN!
BY THE WAY, SIR... ABOUT THOSE CAMPAIGN FUNDS FOR OLD EIKAKU NAKATA OF THE LIBERTY PARTY...
HEY, NOW, HAVE MORE RESPECT WHEN YOU SPEAK OF MR. NAKATA, BOY!

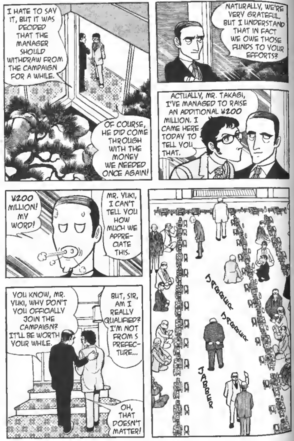

MR. NAKATA IS A REVERED POLITICIAN WHERE I COME FROM!
I'M TERRIBLY INDEBTED TO HIM!
ONCE UPON A TIME, I WAS A LOWLY ASSISTANT AT A VILLAGE HALL ON A TINY ISLAND...
THANKS TO HIM, I'M NOW A BRANCH MANAGER OF KANTO BANK!
A TINY ISLAND? WHAT ISLAND WAS THAT?
A PLACE CALLED OKINO MAFUNE ISLAND.
ENOUGH ABOUT THAT!
I RECEIVED A NOTICE THAT THE NOBLE SPIRIT CLUB IS HOLDING A MEETING TO SUPPORT MR. NAKATA'S CAMPAIGN.
ELECTION DAY IS GETTING CLOSER...
THE MEETING'S ON THE 13TH. DO YOU PLAN TO ATTEND?
OF COURSE I WILL! I WOULDN'T MISS IT FOR ANYTHING!
AFTER ALL, MR. NAKATA IS MY BENEFACTOR!
HE'S A GREAT MAN!
HE'S DONE TREMENDOUS THINGS FOR THE PEOPLE OF S PREFECTURE, BACK WHERE I COME FROM!

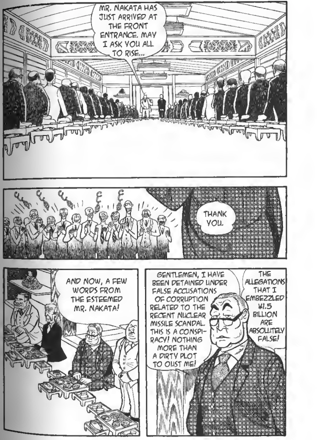

ANYONE WHO ACCUSES HIM OF BEING A CORRUPT POLITICIAN
IS A FOOL AND AN IGNORAMUS! IT'S THE MEDIA, I TELL YOU!
...
BLURP
AAH AHH! I DON'T... FEEL SO...
ZZZZ
ZZZZ
GIVE ME HIS WATCH. I'LL RESET IT TO THE CORRECT TIME.
ZZZZ
ZZZZ
WE ARRIVED HERE AT 10:30 TONIGHT, GOT THAT?
10:30. YOU GOT IT.
LET'S GET YOU HOME, YOU BIG WASTE OF HUMAN FLESH!
YOU'VE GOT A BUSY DAY AHEAD OF YOU TOMORROW!

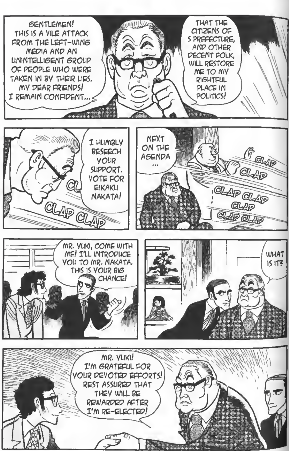

WHAT ?!
M-M-M-MY MIHO?!
MY MIHO... ROBBED THE BANK ?!
SHE KILLED A MAN ?!
YOU MUST BE KIDDING!
ARE YOU BASTARDS TRYING TO PLAY ME FOR A FOOL?
M-MIHO? WHERE IS SHE? IS SHE ALL RIGHT?
FAR FROM IT! YOU WON'T BELIEVE WHAT SHE'S DONE...


HEADLINE: BANK MANAGER'S DAUGHTER ROBS BANK, KILLS GUARD, APPARENTLY FLEES COUNTRY
THAT'S RIGHT! THERE'S NO MISTAKE—I SAW HER MYSELF! THE CHIEF'S DAUGHTER!
銀行支店長の令嬢が銀行強盗
ガードマンを射殺　海外へ逃亡か？
支店長は汚職代議士
中田英覚の後援会理事
HEADLINE: MANAGER IS DIRECTOR OF CAMPAIGN TO RE-ELECT CORRUPT DIET MEMBER EIKAKU NAKATA
THAT'S RIGHT... I'M AFRAID THE BRANCH MANAGER WILL BE UNABLE TO MAKE IT TO THE MEETING. I'LL ATTEND ON HIS BEHALF.
YES, HE'S BEING DETAINED BY THE INVESTIGATORS ALL DAY...
"WHISPER"
"WHISPER"
...
SUFFER! SUFFER LONG AND HARD, TODAY AND FOR MONTHS TO COME!


HELLO!
WHY, HELLO.
PST, MR. YUKI!
THE BANK MANAGER'S REALLY IN UP TO HIS NECK, EH? THIS WHOLE THING WITH MIHO IS REALLY OUT OF HAND!
DID YOU SEE THE BIG EXPOSÉ IN Y DAILY? IT'S NO GOOD FOR US HAVING MIHO'S FATHER AS CAMPAIGN DIRECTOR, IMAGE-WISE, SEE?
MR. NAKATA HAS AN UPHILL BATTLE AHEAD AS IT IS... THIS HURTS HIS IMAGE EVEN MORE!
NOT THAT YOU REALLY NEED TO HEAR ALL THIS...
BUT IN ANY CASE, AT OUR STAFF MEETING THE OTHER DAY...

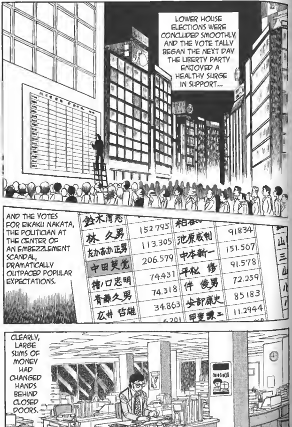

I HATE TO SAY IT, BUT IT WAS DECIDED THAT THE MANAGER SHOULD WITHDRAW FROM THE CAMPAIGN FOR A WHILE.
OF COURSE, HE DID COME THROUGH WITH THE MONEY WE NEEDED ONCE AGAIN!
NATURALLY, WE'RE VERY GRATEFUL, BUT I UNDERSTAND THAT IN FACT WE OWE THOSE FUNDS TO YOUR EFFORTS?
ACTUALLY, MR. TAKAGI, I'VE MANAGED TO RAISE AN ADDITIONAL ¥200 MILLION. I CAME HERE TODAY TO TELL YOU THAT.
¥200 MILLION! MY WORD!
MR. YUKI, I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW MUCH WE APPRECIATE THIS.
YOU KNOW, MR. YUKI, WHY DON'T YOU OFFICIALLY JOIN THE CAMPAIGN? IT'LL BE WORTH YOUR WHILE.
BUT, SIR, AM I REALLY QUALIFIED? I'M NOT FROM S PREFECTURE...
OH, THAT DOESN'T MATTER!
JABBER
JABBER
JABBER

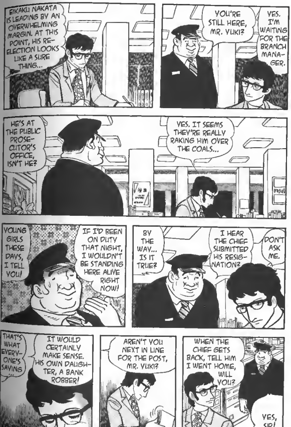

MR. NAKATA HAS JUST ARRIVED AT THE FRONT ENTRANCE. MAY I ASK YOU ALL TO RISE...
THANK YOU.
AND NOW, A FEW WORDS FROM THE ESTEEMED MR. NAKATA!
GENTLEMEN, I HAVE BEEN DETAINED UNDER FALSE ACCUSATIONS OF CORRUPTION RELATED TO THE RECENT NUCLEAR MISSILE SCANDAL. THIS IS A CONSPIRACY! NOTHING MORE THAN A DIRTY PLOT TO OUST ME!
THE ALLEGATIONS THAT I EMBEZZLED ¥1.5 BILLION ARE ABSOLUTELY FALSE!

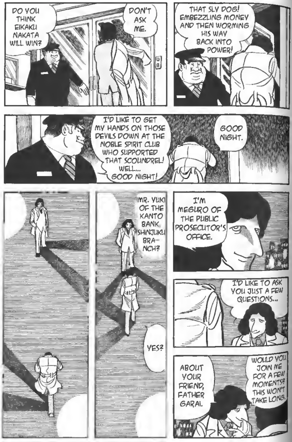

GENTLEMEN! THIS IS A VILE ATTACK FROM THE LEFT-WING MEDIA AND AN UNINTELLIGENT GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO WERE TAKEN IN BY THEIR LIES. MY DEAR FRIENDS! I REMAIN CONFIDENT...
THAT THE CITIZENS OF S PREFECTURE, AND OTHER DECENT FOLK, WILL RESTORE ME TO MY RIGHTFUL PLACE IN POLITICS!
I HUMBLY BESEECH YOUR SUPPORT. VOTE FOR EIKAKU NAKATA!
CLAP
CLAP CLAP
NEXT ON THE AGENDA ...
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP CLAP
CLAP
CLAP CLAP
MR. YUKI, COME WITH ME! I'LL INTRODUCE YOU TO MR. NAKATA. THIS IS YOUR BIG CHANCE!
WHAT IS IT?
MR. YUKI! I'M GRATEFUL FOR YOUR DEVOTED EFFORTS! REST ASSURED THAT THEY WILL BE REWARDED AFTER I'M RE-ELECTED!

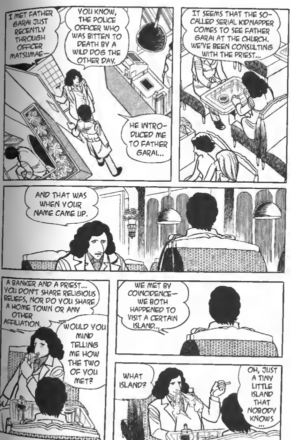
CHAPTER EIGHT

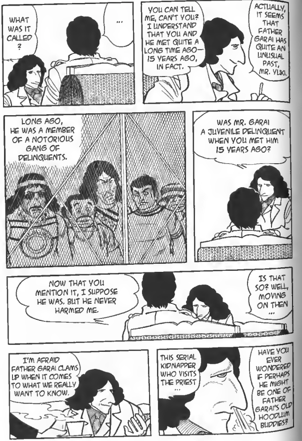
NIGHT OF HONOR

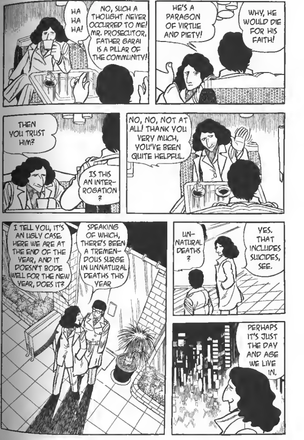

LOWER HOUSE ELECTIONS WERE CONCLUDED SMOOTHLY, AND THE VOTE TALLY BEGAN THE NEXT DAY. THE LIBERTY PARTY ENJOYED A HEALTHY SURGE IN SUPPORT...
AND THE VOTES FOR EIKAKU NAKATA, THE POLITICIAN AT THE CENTER OF AN EMBEZZLEMENT SCANDAL, DRAMATICALLY OUTPACED POPULAR EXPECTATIONS.
鈴木清志
林 久男 152795
たかおか正男 113.305
中田英覚 206.579
猪ノ口忠明 74.431
青藤久男 74.318
広井 哲雄 34.863
6.201
池原成制 91834
中本新一 151.567
平松 修 91.578
伴 俊男 72.259
安部康史 85183
甲斐謙二 11.2944
山
三
山
小
CLEARLY, LARGE SUMS OF MONEY HAD CHANGED HANDS BEHIND CLOSED DOORS.

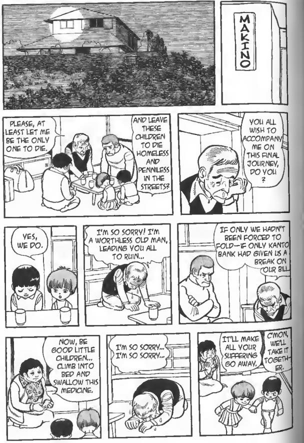

EIKAKU NAKATA IS LEADING BY AN OVERWHELMING MARGIN. AT THIS POINT, HIS RE-ELECTION LOOKS LIKE A SURE THING...
YOU'RE STILL HERE, MR. YUKI?
YES. I'M WAITING FOR THE BRANCH MANAGER.
HE'S AT THE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE, ISN'T HE?
YES. IT SEEMS THEY'RE REALLY RAKING HIM OVER THE COALS...
YOUNG GIRLS THESE DAYS, I TELL YOU!
IF I'D BEEN ON DUTY THAT NIGHT, I WOULDN'T BE STANDING HERE ALIVE RIGHT NOW!
BY THE WAY... IS IT TRUE?
I HEAR THE CHIEF SUBMITTED HIS RESIGNATION?
DON'T ASK ME.
THAT'S WHAT EVERYONE'S SAYING...
IT WOULD CERTAINLY MAKE SENSE. HIS OWN DAUGHTER, A BANK ROBBER!
AREN'T YOU NEXT IN LINE FOR THE POST, MR. YUKI?
WHEN THE CHIEF GETS BACK, TELL HIM I WENT HOME, WILL YOU?
YES, SIR!

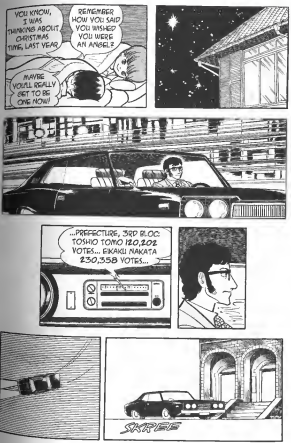

DO YOU THINK EIKAKU NAKATA WILL WIN?
DON'T ASK ME.
THAT SLY DOG! EMBEZZLING MONEY AND THEN WORMING HIS WAY BACK INTO POWER!
I'D LIKE TO GET MY HANDS ON THOSE DEVILS DOWN AT THE NOBLE SPIRIT CLUB WHO SUPPORTED THAT SCOUNDREL! WELL... GOOD NIGHT!
GOOD NIGHT.
MR. YUKI OF THE KANTO BANK, SHINJUKU BRANCH?
YES?
I'M MEGURO OF THE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE.
I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU JUST A FEW QUESTIONS...
ABOUT YOUR FRIEND, FATHER GARAI.
WOULD YOU JOIN ME FOR A FEW MOMENTS? THIS WON'T TAKE LONG.

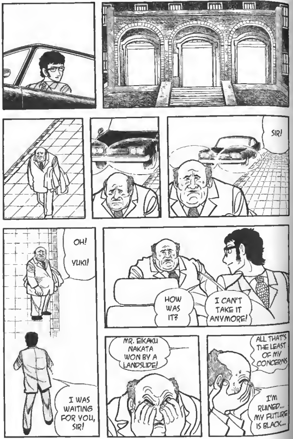

I MET FATHER GARAI JUST RECENTLY THROUGH OFFICER MATSUMAE—
YOU KNOW, THE POLICE OFFICER WHO WAS BITTEN TO DEATH BY A WILD DOG THE OTHER DAY.
HE INTRODUCED ME TO FATHER GARAI...
IT SEEMS THAT THE SO-CALLED SERIAL KIDNAPPER COMES TO SEE FATHER GARAI AT THE CHURCH. WE'VE BEEN CONSULTING WITH THE PRIEST...
AND THAT WAS WHEN YOUR NAME CAME UP.
A BANKER AND A PRIEST... YOU DON'T SHARE RELIGIOUS BELIEFS, NOR DO YOU SHARE A HOME TOWN OR ANY OTHER AFFILIATION.
WOULD YOU MIND TELLING ME HOW THE TWO OF YOU MET?
WE MET BY COINCIDENCE— WE BOTH HAPPENED TO VISIT A CERTAIN ISLAND...
WHAT ISLAND?
OH, JUST A TINY LITTLE ISLAND THAT NOBODY KNOWS ...

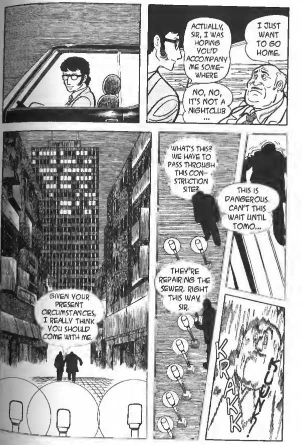

WHAT WAS IT CALLED?
...
YOU CAN TELL ME, CAN'T YOU? I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU AND HE MET QUITE A LONG TIME AGO— 15 YEARS AGO, IN FACT.
ACTUALLY, IT SEEMS THAT FATHER GARAI HAS QUITE AN UNUSUAL PAST, MR. YUKI.
LONG AGO, HE WAS A MEMBER OF A NOTORIOUS GANG OF DELINQUENTS.
WAS MR. GARAI A JUVENILE DELINQUENT WHEN YOU MET HIM 15 YEARS AGO?
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, I SUPPOSE HE WAS. BUT HE NEVER HARMED ME.
IS THAT SO? WELL, MOVING ON THEN ...
I'M AFRAID FATHER GARAI CLAMS UP WHEN IT COMES TO WHAT WE REALLY WANT TO KNOW.
THIS SERIAL KIDNAPPER WHO VISITS THE PRIEST ...
HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED IF PERHAPS HE MIGHT BE ONE OF FATHER GARAI'S OLD HOODLUM BUDDIES?

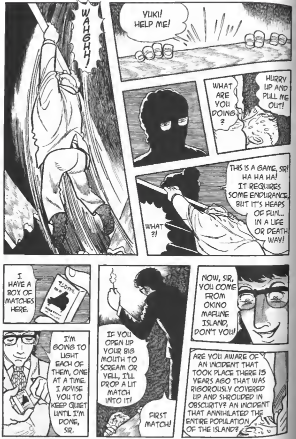

HA HA HA!
NO, SUCH A THOUGHT NEVER OCCURRED TO ME! MR. PROSECUTOR, FATHER GARAI IS A PILLAR OF THE COMMUNITY!
HE'S A PARAGON OF VIRTUE AND PIETY!
WHY, HE WOULD DIE FOR HIS FAITH!
THEN YOU TRUST HIM?
IS THIS AN INTERROGATION?
NO, NO, NOT AT ALL! THANK YOU VERY MUCH, YOU'VE BEEN QUITE HELPFUL.
I TELL YOU, IT'S AN UGLY CASE. HERE WE ARE AT THE END OF THE YEAR, AND IT DOESN'T BODE WELL FOR THE NEW YEAR, DOES IT?
SPEAKING OF WHICH, THERE'S BEEN A TREMENDOUS SURGE IN UNNATURAL DEATHS THIS YEAR
UNNATURAL DEATHS?
YES. THAT INCLUDES SUICIDES, SEE.
PERHAPS IT'S JUST THE DAY AND AGE WE LIVE IN.

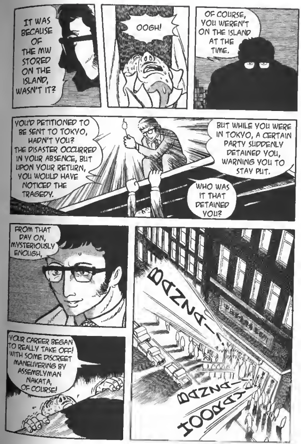

MAKINO
PLEASE, AT LEAST LET ME BE THE ONLY ONE TO DIE.
AND LEAVE THESE CHILDREN TO DIE HOMELESS AND PENNILESS IN THE STREETS?
YOU ALL WISH TO ACCOMPANY ME ON THIS FINAL JOURNEY, DO YOU?
YES, WE DO.
I'M SO SORRY! I'M A WORTHLESS OLD MAN, LEADING YOU ALL TO RUIN...
IF ONLY WE HADN'T BEEN FORCED TO FOLD—IF ONLY KANTO BANK HAD GIVEN US A BREAK ON OUR BILL
NOW, BE GOOD LITTLE CHILDREN... CLIMB INTO BED AND SWALLOW THIS MEDICINE.
I'M SO SORRY... I'M SO SORRY...
IT'LL MAKE ALL YOUR SUFFERING GO AWAY.
C'MON, WE'LL TAKE IT TOGETHER.


YOU KNOW, I WAS THINKING ABOUT CHRISTMAS TIME, LAST YEAR
REMEMBER HOW YOU SAID YOU WISHED YOU WERE AN ANGEL?
MAYBE YOU'LL REALLY GET TO BE ONE NOW!
...PREFECTURE, 3RD BLOC: TOSHIO TOMO 120,202 VOTES... EIKAKU NAKATA 230,358 VOTES...
SKREE

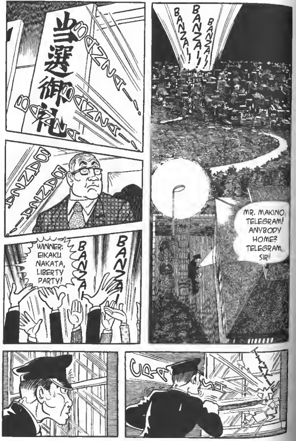

SIR!
OH!
YUKI!
I WAS WAITING FOR YOU, SIR!
HOW WAS IT?
I CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE!
MR. EIKAKU NAKATA WON BY A LANDSLIDE!
ALL THAT'S THE LEAST OF MY CONCERNS
I'M RUINED... MY FUTURE IS BLACK...

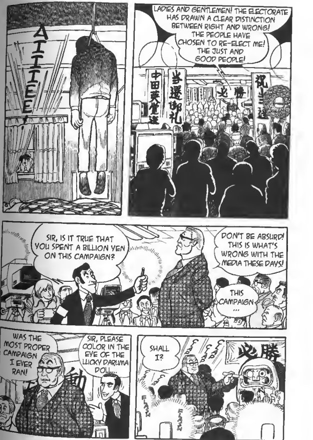

ACTUALLY, SIR, I WAS HOPING YOU'D ACCOMPANY ME SOMEWHERE
I JUST WANT TO GO HOME.
NO, NO, IT'S NOT A NIGHTCLUB ...
GIVEN YOUR PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, I REALLY THINK YOU SHOULD COME WITH ME.
WHAT'S THIS? WE HAVE TO PASS THROUGH THIS CONSTRUCTION SITE?
THIS IS DANGEROUS. CAN'T THIS WAIT UNTIL TOMO...
THEY'RE REPAIRING THE SEWER. RIGHT THIS WAY SIR.
KRAKK!
KUNK!

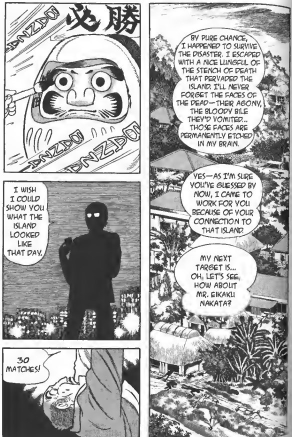

WAHGHH!
YUKI! HELP ME!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
HURRY UP AND PULL ME OUT!
THIS IS A GAME, SIR! HA HA HA! IT REQUIRES SOME ENDURANCE, BUT IT'S HEAPS OF FUN... IN A LIFE OR DEATH WAY!
WHAT?!
I HAVE A BOX OF MATCHES HERE.
I'M GOING TO LIGHT EACH OF THEM, ONE AT A TIME. I ADVISE YOU TO KEEP QUIET UNTIL I'M DONE, SIR.
IF YOU OPEN UP YOUR BIG MOUTH TO SCREAM OR YELL, I'LL DROP A LIT MATCH INTO IT!
FIRST MATCH!
NOW, SIR, YOU COME FROM OKINO MAFUNE ISLAND, DON'T YOU!
ARE YOU AWARE OF AN INCIDENT THAT TOOK PLACE THERE 15 YEARS AGO THAT WAS RIGOROUSLY COVERED UP AND SHROUDED IN OBSCURITY? AN INCIDENT THAT ANNIHILATED THE ENTIRE POPULATION OF THE ISLAND?

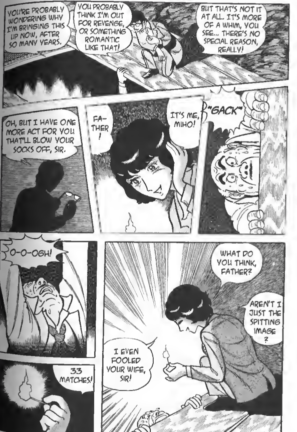

IT WAS BECAUSE OF THE MW STORED ON THE ISLAND, WASN'T IT?
OOGH!
OF COURSE, YOU WEREN'T ON THE ISLAND AT THE TIME.
YOU'D PETITIONED TO BE SENT TO TOKYO, HADN'T YOU? THE DISASTER OCCURRED IN YOUR ABSENCE, BUT UPON YOUR RETURN, YOU WOULD HAVE NOTICED THE TRAGEDY.
BUT WHILE YOU WERE IN TOKYO, A CERTAIN PARTY SUDDENLY DETAINED YOU, WARNING YOU TO STAY PUT.
WHO WAS IT THAT DETAINED YOU?
FROM THAT DAY ON, MYSTERIOUSLY ENOUGH,
YOUR CAREER BEGAN TO REALLY TAKE OFF! WITH SOME DISCREET MANEUVERING BY ASSEMBLYMAN NAKATA, OF COURSE!

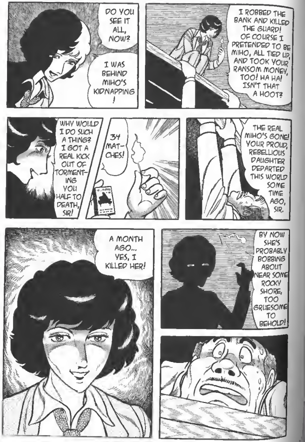
SIGN: ELECTION CELEBRATION

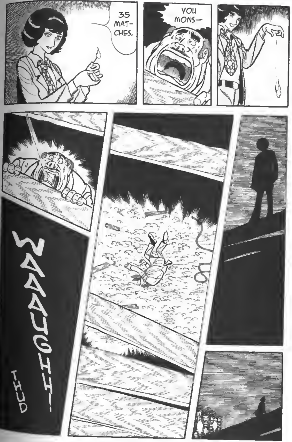

当選御礼
BANZAI—!
BANZAI—!
BANZAI—!
BANZAI
BANZAI
WINNER: EIKAKU NAKATA, LIBERTY PARTY!
BANZAI!
BANZAI!
BANZAI!!
BANZAI!!
BANZAI!!
MR. MAKINO, TELEGRAM! ANYBODY HOME? TELEGRAM, SIR!
CRASH
TINKLE


AIIIEEE!
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! THE ELECTORATE HAS DRAWN A CLEAR DISTINCTION BETWEEN RIGHT AND WRONG! THE PEOPLE HAVE CHOSEN TO RE-ELECT ME! THE JUST AND GOOD PEOPLE!
当選御礼
必勝
祝当選
SIR, IS IT TRUE THAT YOU SPENT A BILLION YEN ON THIS CAMPAIGN?
DON'T BE ABSURD! THIS IS WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE MEDIA THESE DAYS!
THIS CAMPAIGN ...
WAS THE MOST PROPER CAMPAIGN I EVER RAN!
SIR, PLEASE COLOR IN THE EYE OF THE LUCKY DARUMA DOLL...
SHALL I?
必勝
CLAP CLAP CLAP
FLASH
FLASH


必勝
I WISH I COULD SHOW YOU WHAT THE ISLAND LOOKED LIKE THAT DAY.
30 MATCHES!
BY PURE CHANCE, I HAPPENED TO SURVIVE THE DISASTER. I ESCAPED WITH A NICE LUNGFUL OF THE STENCH OF DEATH THAT PERVADED THE ISLAND. I'LL NEVER FORGET THE FACES OF THE DEAD—THEIR AGONY, THE BLOODY BILE THEY'D VOMITED... THOSE FACES ARE PERMANENTLY ETCHED IN MY BRAIN.
YES—AS I'M SURE YOU'VE GUESSED BY NOW, I CAME TO WORK FOR YOU BECAUSE OF YOUR CONNECTION TO THAT ISLAND.
MY NEXT TARGET IS... OH, LET'S SEE, HOW ABOUT MR. EIKAKU NAKATA?

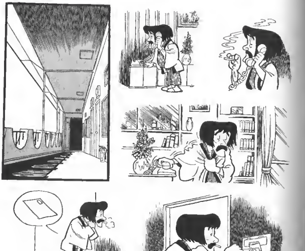

YOU'RE PROBABLY WONDERING WHY I'M BRINGING THIS UP NOW, AFTER SO MANY YEARS.
YOU PROBABLY THINK I'M OUT FOR REVENGE, OR SOMETHING ROMANTIC LIKE THAT!
BUT THAT'S NOT IT AT ALL. IT'S MORE OF A WHIM, YOU SEE... THERE'S NO SPECIAL REASON, REALLY!
OH, BUT I HAVE ONE MORE ACT FOR YOU THAT'LL BLOW YOUR SOCKS OFF, SIR.
FA—THER!
IT'S ME, MIHO!
"GACK"
O-O-OGH!
33 MATCHES!
WHAT DO YOU THINK, FATHER?
AREN'T I JUST THE SPITTING IMAGE?
I EVEN FOOLED YOUR WIFE, SIR!

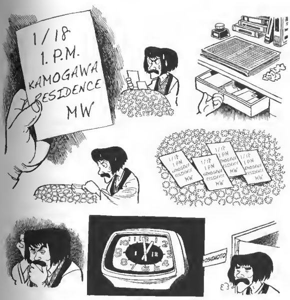

DO YOU SEE IT ALL, NOW?
I WAS BEHIND MIHO'S KIDNAPPING!
I ROBBED THE BANK AND KILLED THE GUARD! OF COURSE I PRETENDED TO BE MIHO, ALL TIED UP, AND TOOK YOUR RANSOM MONEY, TOO! HA HA! ISN'T THAT A HOOT?
WHY WOULD I DO SUCH A THING? I GOT A REAL KICK OUT OF TORMENTING YOU HALF TO DEATH, SIR!
34 MATCHES!
THE REAL MIHO'S GONE! YOUR PROUD, REBELLIOUS DAUGHTER DEPARTED THIS WORLD SOME TIME AGO, SIR.
A MONTH AGO... YES, I KILLED HER!
BY NOW SHE'S PROBABLY BOBBING ABOUT NEAR SOME ROCKY SHORE, TOO GRUESOME TO BEHOLD!

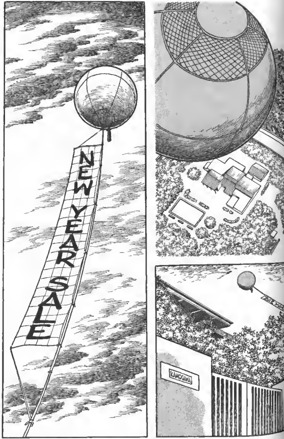

35 MATCHES.
YOU MONS—
WAAAUGHH!
THUD

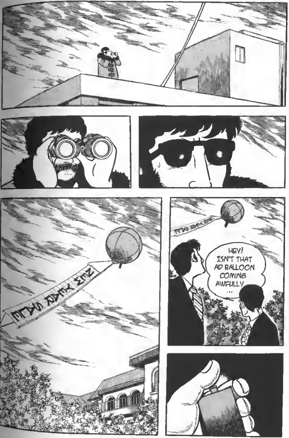
CHAPTER NINE

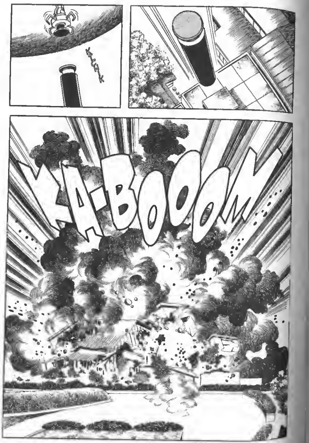
PRELUDE TO A KILLING

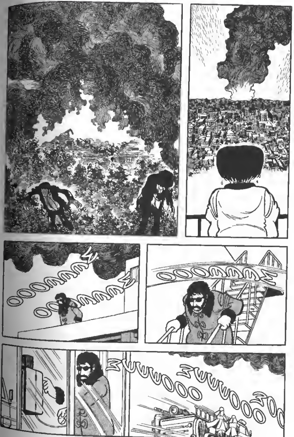


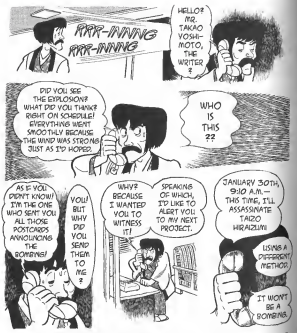

1/18
1. P.M.
KAMOGAWA
RESIDENCE
MW
1/18 1 PM KAMOGAWA RESIDENCE MW
YOSHIMOTO
RESIDENCE
MW

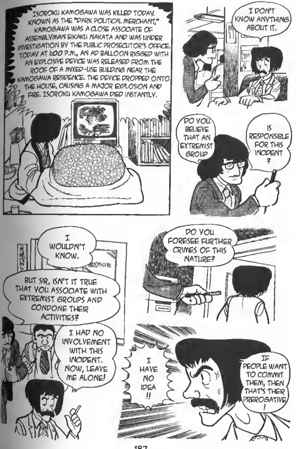

NEW YEAR SALE
KAMOGAWA

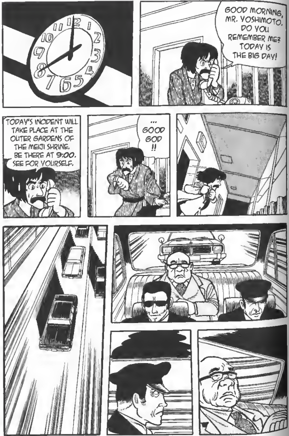

HEY! ISN'T THAT AD BALLOON COMING AWFULLY ...

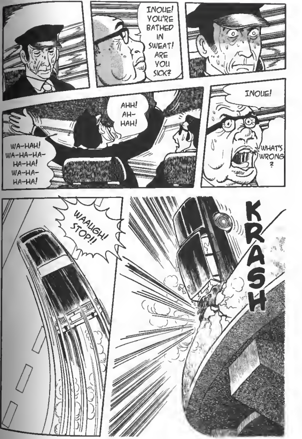

KLICK
KA-BOOOM

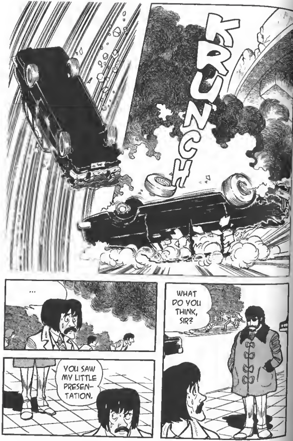

OOOOMMMMW
OOMMMMM
OOOOMMMMM
ZWWWOOOO
ZWWWOOOOOOZOO

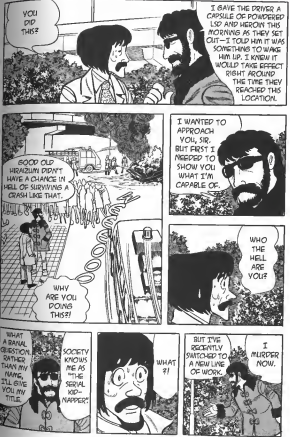

RRR-INNNG
RRR-INNNG
HELLO? MR. TAKAO YOSHIMOTO, THE WRITER?
DID YOU SEE THE EXPLOSION? WHAT DID YOU THINK? RIGHT ON SCHEDULE! EVERYTHING WENT SMOOTHLY BECAUSE THE WIND WAS STRONG JUST AS I'D HOPED.
WHO IS THIS??
AS IF YOU DIDN'T KNOW! I'M THE ONE WHO SENT YOU ALL THOSE POSTCARDS ANNOUNCING THE BOMBING!
YOU! BUT WHY DID YOU SEND THEM TO ME?
WHY? BECAUSE I WANTED YOU TO WITNESS IT!
SPEAKING OF WHICH, I'D LIKE TO ALERT YOU TO MY NEXT PROJECT.
JANUARY 30TH, 9:10 A.M.— THIS TIME, I'LL ASSASSINATE TAIZO HIRAIZUMI
USING A DIFFERENT METHOD.
IT WON'T BE A BOMBING.
FEEL FREE TO ALERT THE PRESS OR THE COPS IF YOU LIKE...
THOUGH I DON'T THINK YOU'D DO THAT.

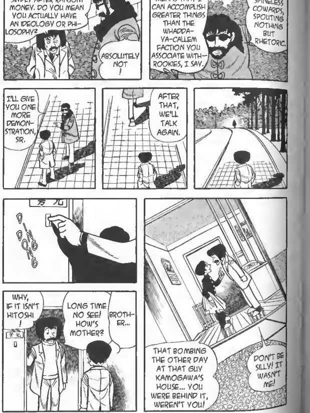

ISOROKU KAMOGAWA WAS KILLED TODAY. KNOWN AS THE "DARK POLITICAL MERCHANT," KAMOGAWA WAS A CLOSE ASSOCIATE OF ASSEMBLYMAN EIKAKU NAKATA AND WAS UNDER INVESTIGATION BY THE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE. TODAY AT 1:00 P.M., AN AD BALLOON RIGGED WITH AN EXPLOSIVE DEVICE WAS RELEASED FROM THE ROOF OF A MIXED-USE BUILDING NEAR THE KAMOGAWA RESIDENCE. THE DEVICE DROPPED ONTO THE HOUSE, CAUSING A MAJOR EXPLOSION AND FIRE. ISOROKU KAMOGAWA DIED INSTANTLY.
I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT.
DO YOU BELIEVE THAT AN EXTREMIST GROUP
IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS INCIDENT?
I WOULDN'T KNOW.
DO YOU FORESEE FURTHER CRIMES OF THIS NATURE?
BUT SIR, ISN'T IT TRUE THAT YOU ASSOCIATE WITH EXTREMIST GROUPS AND CONDONE THEIR ACTIVITIES?
I HAD NO INVOLVEMENT WITH THIS INCIDENT. NOW, LEAVE ME ALONE!
I HAVE NO IDEA!!
IF PEOPLE WANT TO COMMIT THEM, THEN THAT'S THEIR PREROGATIVE!

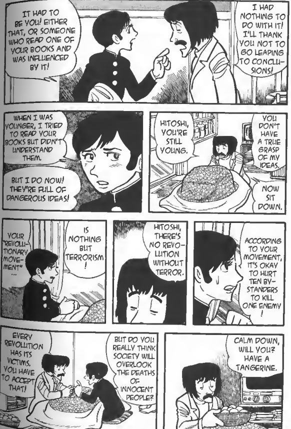

GOOD MORNING, MR. YOSHIMOTO. DO YOU REMEMBER ME? TODAY IS THE BIG DAY!
TODAY'S INCIDENT WILL TAKE PLACE AT THE OUTER GARDENS OF THE MEIJI SHRINE. BE THERE AT 9:00. SEE FOR YOURSELF.
... GOOD GOD!!

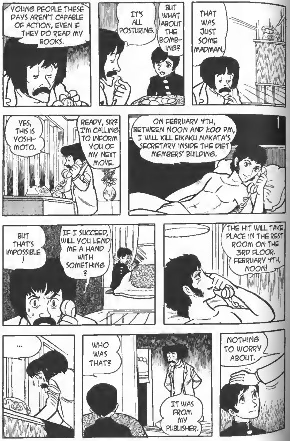

INOUE! YOU'RE BATHED IN SWEAT! ARE YOU SICK?
AHH! AH-HAH!
WA-HAH! WA-HA-HA-HA-HA! WA-HA-HA-HA!
INOUE!
WHAT'S WRONG?
WAAUGH! STOP!!
KRASH

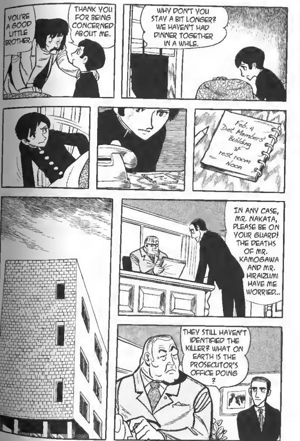

KRUNCH
...
WHAT DO YOU THINK, SIR?
YOU SAW MY LITTLE PRESENTATION.

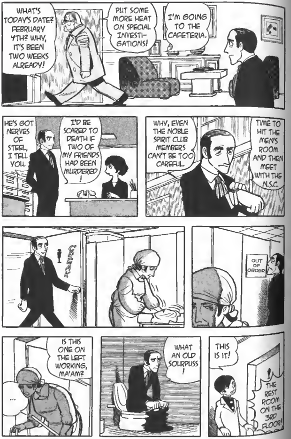

YOU DID THIS?
I GAVE THE DRIVER A CAPSULE OF POWDERED LSD AND HEROIN THIS MORNING AS THEY SET OUT—I TOLD HIM IT WAS SOMETHING TO WAKE HIM UP. I KNEW IT WOULD TAKE EFFECT RIGHT AROUND THE TIME THEY REACHED THIS LOCATION.
GOOD OLD HIRAIZUMI DIDN'T HAVE A CHANCE IN HELL OF SURVIVING A CRASH LIKE THAT.
WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?!
I WANTED TO APPROACH YOU, SIR. BUT FIRST I NEEDED TO SHOW YOU WHAT I'M CAPABLE OF.
WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?
WHAT A BANAL QUESTION. RATHER THAN MY NAME, I'LL GIVE YOU MY TITLE.
SOCIETY KNOWS ME AS "THE SERIAL KIDNAPPER."
WHAT?!
BUT I'VE RECENTLY SWITCHED TO A NEW LINE OF WORK.
I MURDER NOW.

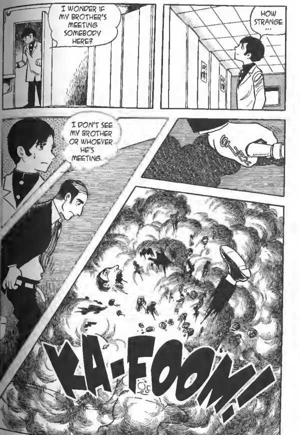

I THOUGHT YOU WERE A COMMON KIDNAPPER, SIMPLY AFTER RANSOM MONEY. DO YOU MEAN YOU ACTUALLY HAVE AN IDEOLOGY OR PHILOSOPHY?
ABSOLUTELY NOT!
AND THE FACT THAT I DON'T MEANS THAT I CAN ACCOMPLISH GREATER THINGS THAN THE WHADDA-YA-CALLEM FACTION YOU ASSOCIATE WITH—ROOKIES, I SAY.
THEY'RE A PACK OF SPINELESS COWARDS, SPOUTING NOTHING BUT RHETORIC.
I'LL GIVE YOU ONE MORE DEMONSTRATION, SIR.
AFTER THAT, WE'LL TALK AGAIN.
DING DONG
WHY, IF IT ISN'T HITOSHI!
LONG TIME NO SEE! HOW'S MOTHER?
BROTHER...
THAT BOMBING THE OTHER DAY AT THAT GUY KAMOGAWA'S HOUSE... YOU WERE BEHIND IT, WEREN'T YOU!
DON'T BE SILLY! IT WASN'T ME!

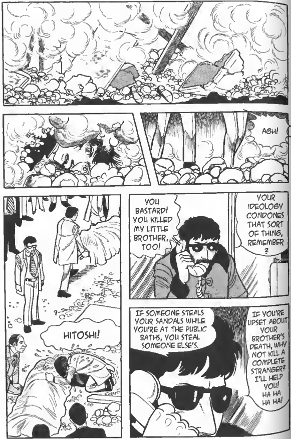

IT HAD TO BE YOU! EITHER THAT, OR SOMEONE WHO READ ONE OF YOUR BOOKS AND WAS INFLUENCED BY IT!
I HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH IT! I'LL THANK YOU NOT TO GO LEAPING TO CONCLUSIONS!
WHEN I WAS YOUNGER, I TRIED TO READ YOUR BOOKS BUT DIDN'T UNDERSTAND THEM.
BUT I DO NOW! THEY'RE FULL OF DANGEROUS IDEAS!
HITOSHI, YOU'RE STILL YOUNG.
YOU DON'T HAVE A TRUE GRASP OF MY IDEAS.
NOW SIT DOWN.
YOUR "REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT"...
IS NOTHING BUT TERRORISM!
HITOSHI, THERE'S NO REVOLUTION WITHOUT TERROR.
ACCORDING TO YOUR MOVEMENT, IT'S OKAY TO HURT TEN BYSTANDERS TO KILL ONE ENEMY!
EVERY REVOLUTION HAS ITS VICTIMS. YOU HAVE TO ACCEPT THAT!
BUT DO YOU REALLY THINK SOCIETY WILL OVERLOOK THE DEATHS OF INNOCENT PEOPLE?
CALM DOWN, WILL YOU? HAVE A TANGERINE.


YOUNG PEOPLE THESE DAYS AREN'T CAPABLE OF ACTION, EVEN IF THEY DO READ MY BOOKS.
IT'S ALL POSTURING.
BUT WHAT ABOUT THE BOMBING?
THAT WAS JUST SOME MADMAN.
YES, THIS IS YOSHIMOTO.
READY, SIR? I'M CALLING TO INFORM YOU OF MY NEXT MOVE.
ON FEBRUARY 4TH, BETWEEN NOON AND 1:00 PM, I WILL KILL EIKAKU NAKATA'S SECRETARY INSIDE THE DIET MEMBERS' BUILDING.
BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
IF I SUCCEED, WILL YOU LEND ME A HAND WITH SOMETHING?
THE HIT WILL TAKE PLACE IN THE REST ROOM ON THE 3RD FLOOR. FEBRUARY 4TH, NOON!
...
WHO WAS THAT?
IT WAS FROM MY PUBLISHER.
NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.


YOU'RE A GOOD LITTLE BROTHER.
THANK YOU FOR BEING CONCERNED ABOUT ME.
WHY DON'T YOU STAY A BIT LONGER? WE HAVEN'T HAD DINNER TOGETHER IN A WHILE.
Feb. 4 Diet Members' Building 3F rest room Noon
IN ANY CASE, MR. NAKATA, PLEASE BE ON YOUR GUARD! THE DEATHS OF MR. KAMOGAWA AND MR. HIRAIZUMI HAVE ME WORRIED...
THEY STILL HAVEN'T IDENTIFIED THE KILLER? WHAT ON EARTH IS THE PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE DOING?


WHAT'S TODAY'S DATE? FEBRUARY 4TH? WHY, IT'S BEEN TWO WEEKS ALREADY!
PUT SOME MORE HEAT ON SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS!
I'M GOING TO THE CAFETERIA.
HE'S GOT NERVES OF STEEL, I TELL YOU.
I'D BE SCARED TO DEATH IF TWO OF MY FRIENDS HAD BEEN MURDERED!
WHY, EVEN THE NOBLE SPIRIT CLUB MEMBERS CAN'T BE TOO CAREFUL.
TIME TO HIT THE MEN'S ROOM AND THEN MEET WITH THE N.S.C.
CREAK
OUT OF ORDER
IS THIS ONE ON THE LEFT WORKING, MA'AM?
...
WHAT AN OLD SOURPUSS!
THIS IS IT!
THE REST ROOM ON THE 3RD FLOOR!

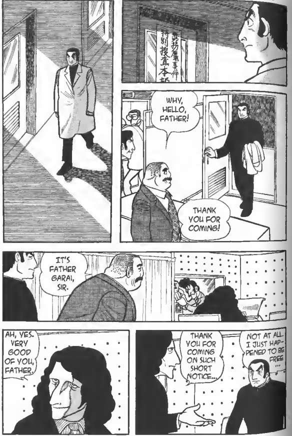

I WONDER IF MY BROTHER'S MEETING SOMEBODY HERE?
HOW STRANGE ...
I DON'T SEE MY BROTHER OR WHOEVER HE'S MEETING.
KA-FOOM!!

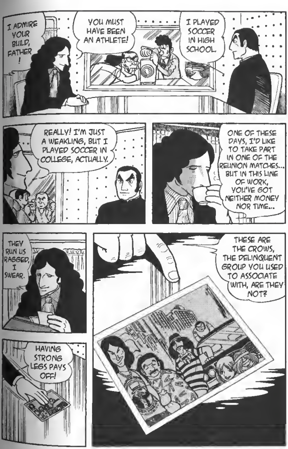

AGH!
HITOSHI!
YOU BASTARD! YOU KILLED MY LITTLE BROTHER, TOO!
YOUR IDEOLOGY CONDONES THAT SORT OF THING, REMEMBER?
IF SOMEONE STEALS YOUR SANDALS WHILE YOU'RE AT THE PUBLIC BATHS, YOU STEAL SOMEONE ELSE'S.
IF YOU'RE UPSET ABOUT YOUR BROTHER'S DEATH, WHY NOT KILL A COMPLETE STRANGER? I'LL HELP YOU! HA HA HA HA!

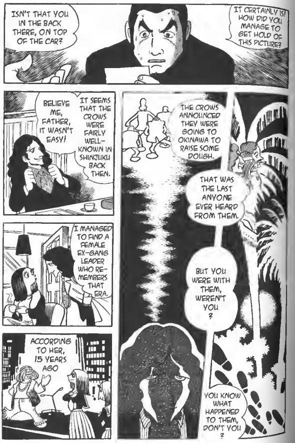
CHAPTER TEN

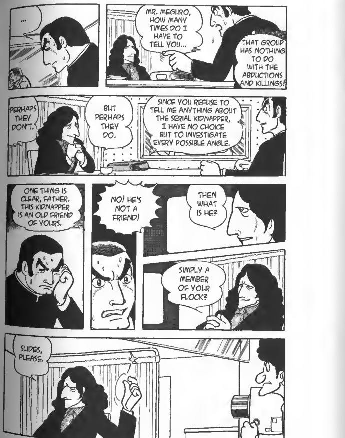
PIT OF SUSPICION

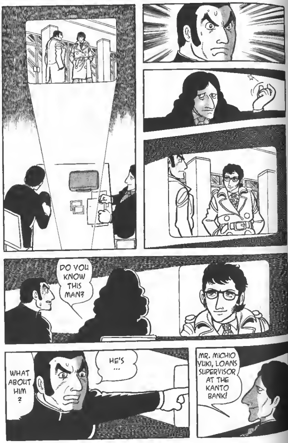
SIGN: SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS HQ: SERIAL KIDNAPPER CASE

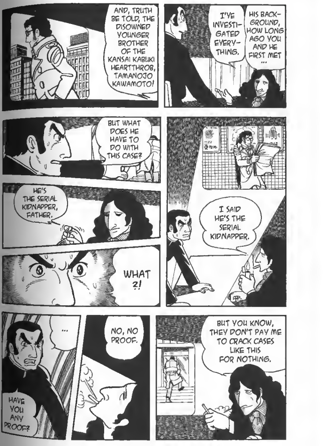

誘拐魔事件
特別捜査本部
WHY, HELLO, FATHER!
THANK YOU FOR COMING!
IT'S FATHER GARAI, SIR.
AH, YES. VERY GOOD OF YOU, FATHER.
THANK YOU FOR COMING ON SUCH SHORT NOTICE...
NOT AT ALL. I JUST HAPPENED TO BE FREE...

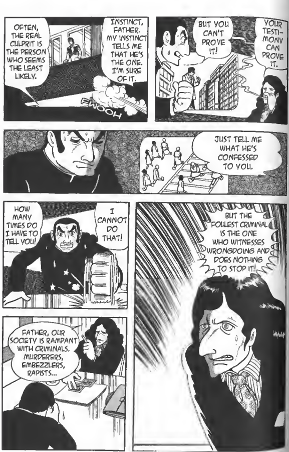

I ADMIRE YOUR BUILD, FATHER!
YOU MUST HAVE BEEN AN ATHLETE!
I PLAYED SOCCER IN HIGH SCHOOL.
REALLY! I'M JUST A WEAKLING, BUT I PLAYED SOCCER IN COLLEGE, ACTUALLY.
ONE OF THESE DAYS, I'D LIKE TO TAKE PART IN ONE OF THE REUNION MATCHES... BUT IN THIS LINE OF WORK, YOU'VE GOT NEITHER MONEY NOR TIME...
THEY RUN US RAGGED, I SWEAR.
HAVING STRONG LEGS PAYS OFF!
THESE ARE THE CROWS, THE DELINQUENT GROUP YOU USED TO ASSOCIATE WITH, ARE THEY NOT?

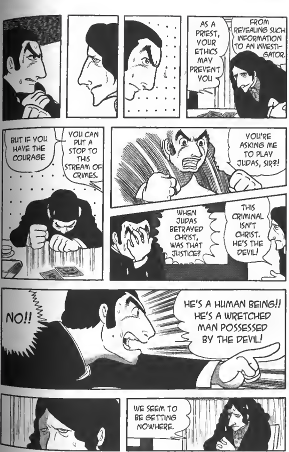

ISN'T THAT YOU IN THE BACK THERE, ON TOP OF THE CAR?
IT CERTAINLY IS! HOW DID YOU MANAGE TO GET HOLD OF THIS PICTURE?
BELIEVE ME, FATHER, IT WASN'T EASY!
IT SEEMS THAT THE CROWS WERE FAIRLY WELL-KNOWN IN SHINJUKU BACK THEN.
I MANAGED TO FIND A FEMALE EX-GANG LEADER WHO REMEMBERS THAT ERA.
ACCORDING TO HER, 15 YEARS AGO
THE CROWS ANNOUNCED THEY WERE GOING TO OKINAWA TO RAISE SOME DOUGH.
THAT WAS THE LAST ANYONE EVER HEARD FROM THEM.
BUT YOU WERE WITH THEM, WEREN'T YOU?
YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM, DON'T YOU?

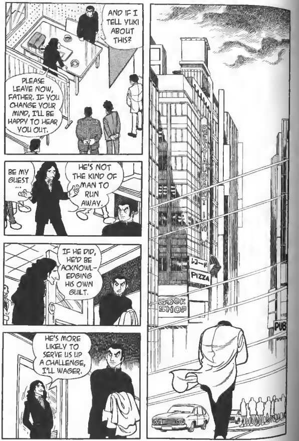

...
MR. MEGURO, HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU...
THAT GROUP HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THE ABDUCTIONS AND KILLINGS!
PERHAPS THEY DON'T.
BUT PERHAPS THEY DO.
SINCE YOU REFUSE TO TELL ME ANYTHING ABOUT THE SERIAL KIDNAPPER, I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO INVESTIGATE EVERY POSSIBLE ANGLE.
ONE THING IS CLEAR, FATHER. THIS KIDNAPPER IS AN OLD FRIEND OF YOURS.
NO! HE'S NOT A FRIEND!
THEN WHAT IS HE?
SIMPLY A MEMBER OF YOUR FLOCK?
SLIDES, PLEASE.

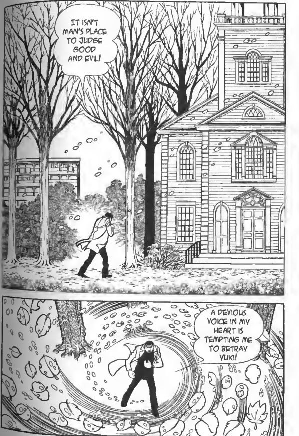

DO YOU KNOW THIS MAN?
WHAT ABOUT HIM?
HE'S ...
MR. MICHIO YUKI, LOANS SUPERVISOR AT THE KANTO BANK!

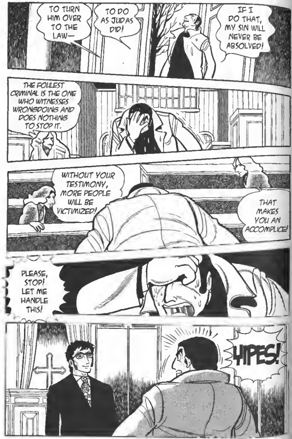

AND, TRUTH BE TOLD, THE DISOWNED YOUNGER BROTHER OF THE KANSAI KABUKI HEARTTHROB, TAMANOJO KAWAMOTO!
I'VE INVESTIGATED EVERYTHING.
HIS BACKGROUND, HOW LONG AGO YOU AND HE FIRST MET ...
BUT WHAT DOES HE HAVE TO DO WITH THIS CASE?
HE'S THE SERIAL KIDNAPPER, FATHER.
WHAT?!
I SAID HE'S THE SERIAL KIDNAPPER.
...
HAVE YOU ANY PROOF?
NO, NO PROOF.
BUT YOU KNOW, THEY DON'T PAY ME TO CRACK CASES LIKE THIS FOR NOTHING.

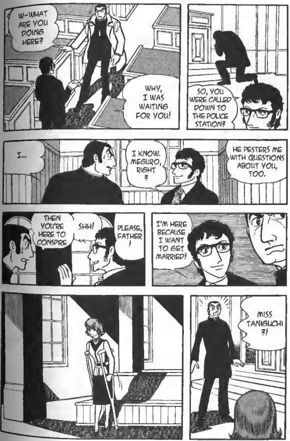

OFTEN, THE REAL CULPRIT IS THE PERSON WHO SEEMS THE LEAST LIKELY.
INSTINCT, FATHER. MY INSTINCT TELLS ME THAT HE'S THE ONE. I'M SURE OF IT.
FWOOH
BUT YOU CAN'T PROVE IT!
YOUR TESTIMONY CAN PROVE IT.
JUST TELL ME WHAT HE'S CONFESSED TO YOU.
HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU!
I CANNOT DO THAT!
FATHER, OUR SOCIETY IS RAMPANT WITH CRIMINALS. MURDERERS, EMBEZZLERS, RAPISTS...
BUT THE FOULEST CRIMINAL IS THE ONE WHO WITNESSES WRONGDOING AND DOES NOTHING TO STOP IT!

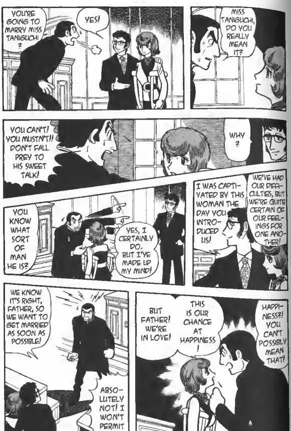

AS A PRIEST, YOUR ETHICS MAY PREVENT YOU
FROM REVEALING SUCH INFORMATION TO AN INVESTIGATOR.
BUT IF YOU HAVE THE COURAGE
YOU CAN PUT A STOP TO THIS STREAM OF CRIMES.
YOU'RE ASKING ME TO PLAY JUDAS, SIR?!
WHEN JUDAS BETRAYED CHRIST, WAS THAT JUSTICE?
THIS CRIMINAL ISN'T CHRIST. HE'S THE DEVIL!
NO!!
HE'S A HUMAN BEING!! HE'S A WRETCHED MAN POSSESSED BY THE DEVIL!
WE SEEM TO BE GETTING NOWHERE.

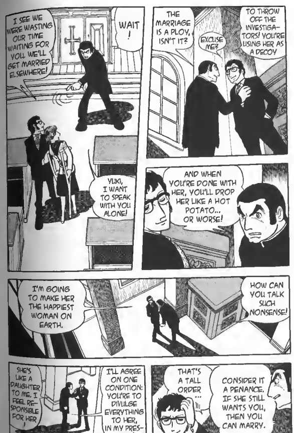

AND IF I TELL YUKI ABOUT THIS?
PLEASE LEAVE NOW, FATHER. IF YOU CHANGE YOUR MIND, I'LL BE HAPPY TO HEAR YOU OUT.
BE MY GUEST ...
HE'S NOT THE KIND OF MAN TO RUN AWAY.
IF HE DID, HE'D BE ACKNOWLEDGING HIS OWN GUILT.
HE'S MORE LIKELY TO SERVE US UP A CHALLENGE, I'LL WAGER.
RESTAURANT LION
レコード
PIZZA
BOOK SHOP
PUB

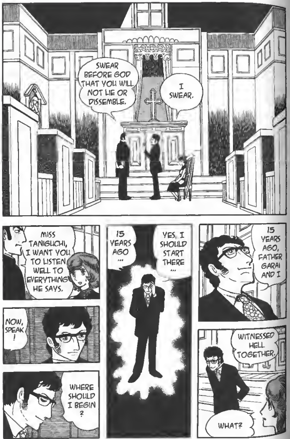

IT ISN'T MAN'S PLACE TO JUDGE GOOD AND EVIL!
A DEVIOUS VOICE IN MY HEART IS TEMPTING ME TO BETRAY YUKI!

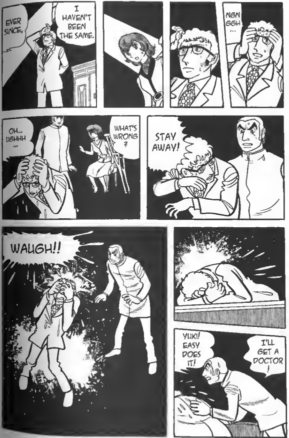

TO TURN HIM OVER TO THE LAW—
TO DO AS JUDAS DID!
IF I DO THAT, MY SIN WILL NEVER BE ABSOLVED!
THE FOULEST CRIMINAL IS THE ONE WHO WITNESSES WRONGDOING AND DOES NOTHING TO STOP IT.
WITHOUT YOUR TESTIMONY, MORE PEOPLE WILL BE VICTIMIZED!
THAT MAKES YOU AN ACCOMPLICE!
PLEASE, STOP! LET ME HANDLE THIS!
YIPES!

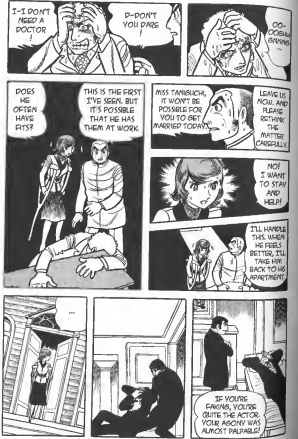

W-WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
WHY, I WAS WAITING FOR YOU!
SO, YOU WERE CALLED DOWN TO THE POLICE STATION?
I...
I KNOW. MEGURO, RIGHT?
HE PESTERS ME WITH QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU, TOO.
THEN YOU'RE HERE TO CONSPIRE
SHH!
PLEASE, FATHER!
I'M HERE BECAUSE I WANT TO GET MARRIED!
MISS TANIGUCHI?!

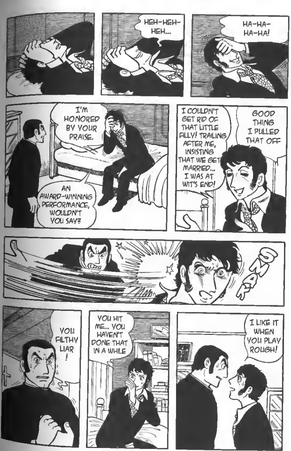

YOU'RE GOING TO MARRY MISS TANIGUCHI?
YES!
MISS TANIGUCHI, DO YOU REALLY MEAN IT?
YOU CAN'T! YOU MUSTN'T!! DON'T FALL PREY TO HIS SWEET TALK!
WHY?
YOU KNOW WHAT SORT OF MAN HE IS?
YES, I CERTAINLY DO. BUT I'VE MADE UP MY MIND!
I WAS CAPTIVATED BY THIS WOMAN THE DAY YOU INTRODUCED US!
WE'VE HAD OUR DIFFICULTIES, BUT WE'RE QUITE CERTAIN OF OUR FEELINGS FOR ONE ANOTHER!
WE KNOW IT'S RIGHT, FATHER, SO WE WANT TO GET MARRIED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!
ABSOLUTELY NOT! I WON'T PERMIT IT!
BUT FATHER! WE'RE IN LOVE!
THIS IS OUR CHANCE AT HAPPINESS!
HAPPINESS?! YOU CAN'T POSSIBLY MEAN THAT!

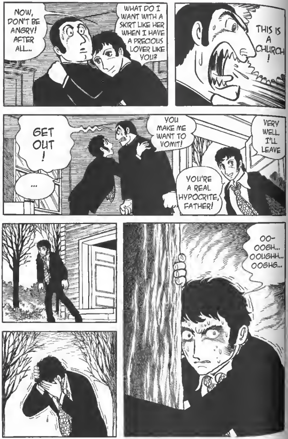

I SEE WE WERE WASTING OUR TIME WAITING FOR YOU WE'LL GET MARRIED ELSEWHERE!
WAIT!
YUKI, I WANT TO SPEAK WITH YOU ALONE!
THE MARRIAGE IS A PLOY, ISN'T IT?
EXCUSE ME?
TO THROW OFF THE INVESTIGATORS! YOU'RE USING HER AS A DECOY
AND WHEN YOU'RE DONE WITH HER, YOU'LL DROP HER LIKE A HOT POTATO... OR WORSE!
I'M GOING TO MAKE HER THE HAPPIEST WOMAN ON EARTH.
HOW CAN YOU TALK SUCH NONSENSE!
SHE'S LIKE A DAUGHTER TO ME. I FEEL RESPONSIBLE FOR HER!
I'LL AGREE ON ONE CONDITION: YOU'RE TO DIVULGE EVERYTHING TO HER, IN MY PRESENCE!
THAT'S A TALL ORDER...
CONSIDER IT A PENANCE. IF SHE STILL WANTS YOU, THEN YOU CAN MARRY.


SWEAR BEFORE GOD THAT YOU WILL NOT LIE OR DISSEMBLE.
I SWEAR.
MISS TANIGUCHI, I WANT YOU TO LISTEN WELL TO EVERYTHING HE SAYS.
NOW, SPEAK!
WHERE SHOULD I BEGIN?
15 YEARS AGO...
YES, I SHOULD START THERE...
15 YEARS AGO, FATHER GARAI AND I
WITNESSED HELL TOGETHER.
WHAT?


EVER SINCE,
I HAVEN'T BEEN THE SAME.
NGN GGH...
OH... UGHHH...
WHAT'S WRONG?
STAY AWAY!
WAUGH!!
YUKI! EASY DOES IT!
I'LL GET A DOCTOR!

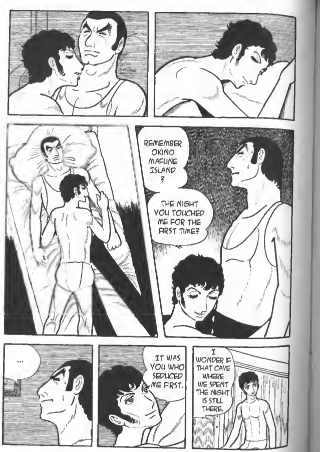

I-I DON'T NEED A DOCTOR!
D-DON'T YOU DARE!
OO-OOGHH GNNNG...
DOES HE OFTEN HAVE FITS?
THIS IS THE FIRST I'VE SEEN. BUT IT'S POSSIBLE THAT HE HAS THEM AT WORK.
MISS TANIGUCHI, IT WON'T BE POSSIBLE FOR YOU TO GET MARRIED TODAY.
LEAVE US NOW. AND PLEASE RETHINK THE MATTER CAREFULLY.
NO! I WANT TO STAY AND HELP!
I'LL HANDLE THIS. WHEN HE FEELS BETTER, I'LL TAKE HIM BACK TO HIS APARTMENT.
...
IF YOU'RE FAKING, YOU'RE QUITE THE ACTOR. YOUR AGONY WAS ALMOST PALPABLE!

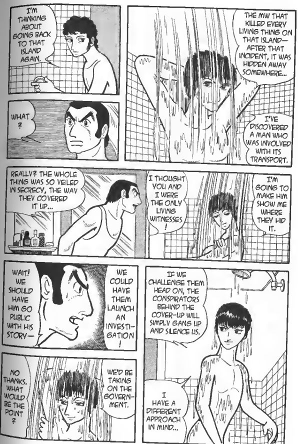

HEH-HEH-HEH...
HA-HA-HA-HA!
I'M HONORED BY YOUR PRAISE.
AN AWARD-WINNING PERFORMANCE, WOULDN'T YOU SAY?
GOOD THING I PULLED THAT OFF
I COULDN'T GET RID OF THAT LITTLE FILLY! TRAILING AFTER ME, INSISTING THAT WE GET MARRIED... I WAS AT WIT'S END!
SMAK
YOU FILTHY LIAR!
YOU HIT ME... YOU HAVEN'T DONE THAT IN A WHILE
I LIKE IT WHEN YOU PLAY ROUGH!

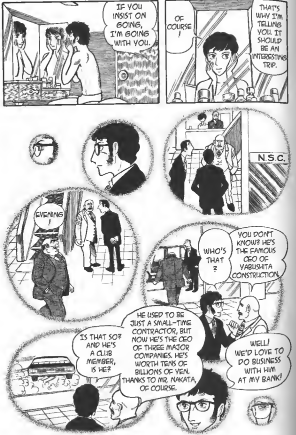

NOW, DON'T BE ANGRY! AFTER ALL...
WHAT DO I WANT WITH A SKIRT LIKE HER WHEN I HAVE A PRECIOUS LOVER LIKE YOU?
THIS IS A CHURCH!
GET OUT!
...
YOU MAKE ME WANT TO VOMIT!
VERY WELL. I'LL LEAVE
YOU'RE A REAL HYPOCRITE, FATHER!
OO-OOGH... OOUGHH... OOGHG...

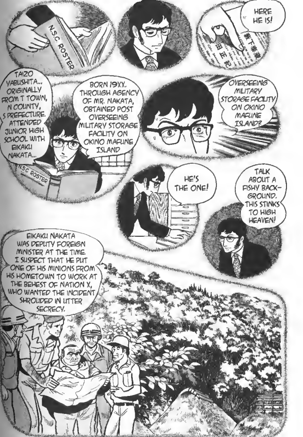
CHAPTER ELEVEN

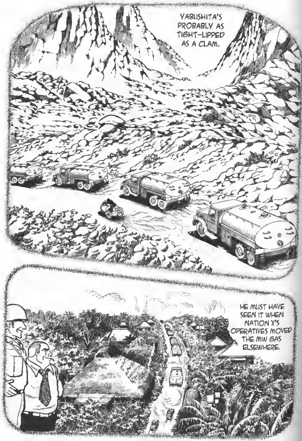
A THIRD WITNESS

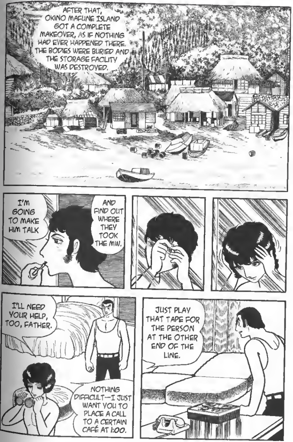

REMEMBER OKINO MAFUNE ISLAND ?
THE NIGHT YOU TOUCHED ME FOR THE FIRST TIME?
...
IT WAS YOU WHO SEDUCED ME FIRST.
I WONDER IF THAT CAVE WHERE WE SPENT THE NIGHT IS STILL THERE.

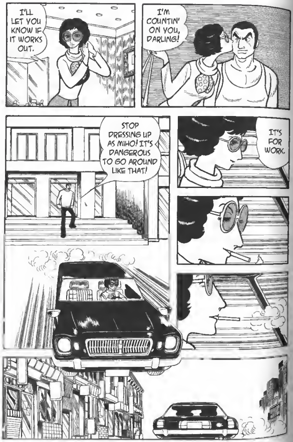

I'M THINKING ABOUT GOING BACK TO THAT ISLAND AGAIN.
WHAT ?
THE MW THAT KILLED EVERY LIVING THING ON THAT ISLAND— AFTER THAT INCIDENT, IT WAS HIDDEN AWAY SOMEWHERE...
I'VE DISCOVERED A MAN WHO WAS INVOLVED WITH ITS TRANSPORT.
REALLY? THE WHOLE THING WAS SO VEILED IN SECRECY, THE WAY THEY COVERED IT UP...
I THOUGHT YOU AND I WERE THE ONLY LIVING WITNESSES !
I'M GOING TO MAKE HIM SHOW ME WHERE THEY HID IT.
WAIT! WE SHOULD HAVE HIM GO PUBLIC WITH HIS STORY—
WE COULD HAVE THEM LAUNCH AN INVESTIGATION !
NO THANKS. WHAT WOULD BE THE POINT ?
WE'D BE TAKING ON THE GOVERNMENT.
IF WE CHALLENGE THEM HEAD ON, THE CONSPIRATORS BEHIND THE COVER-UP WILL SIMPLY GANG UP AND SILENCE US.
I HAVE A DIFFERENT APPROACH IN MIND...

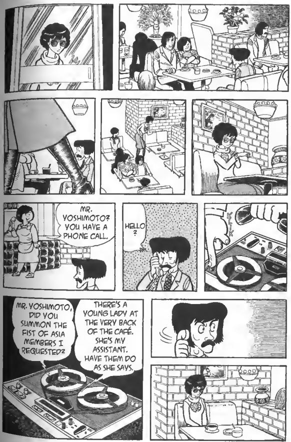

IF YOU INSIST ON GOING, I'M GOING WITH YOU.
OF COURSE!
THAT'S WHY I'M TELLING YOU. IT SHOULD BE AN INTERESTING TRIP.
N.S.C.
EVENING!
WHO'S THAT?
YOU DON'T KNOW? HE'S THE FAMOUS CEO OF YABUSHITA CONSTRUCTION.
IS THAT SO? AND HE'S A CLUB MEMBER, IS HE?
HE USED TO BE JUST A SMALL-TIME CONTRACTOR, BUT NOW HE'S THE CEO OF THREE MAJOR COMPANIES. HE'S WORTH TENS OF BILLIONS OF YEN. THANKS TO MR. NAKATA, OF COURSE.
WELL! WE'D LOVE TO DO BUSINESS WITH HIM AT MY BANK!

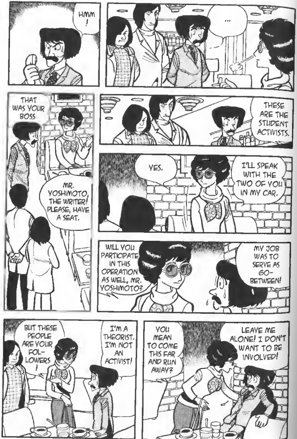

N.S.C ROSTER
HERE HE IS!
TAIZO YABUSHITA... ORIGINALLY FROM T TOWN, N COUNTY, S PREFECTURE. ATTENDED JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL WITH EIKAKU NAKATA...
BORN 19XX. THROUGH AGENCY OF MR. NAKATA, OBTAINED POST OVERSEEING MILITARY STORAGE FACILITY ON OKINO MAFUNE ISLAND
N.S.C ROSTER
OVERSEEING MILITARY STORAGE FACILITY ON OKINO MAFUNE ISLAND?
HE'S THE ONE!
TALK ABOUT A FISHY BACKGROUND. THIS STINKS TO HIGH HEAVEN!
EIKAKU NAKATA WAS DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER AT THE TIME. I SUSPECT THAT HE PUT ONE OF HIS MINIONS FROM HIS HOMETOWN TO WORK AT THE BEHEST OF NATION X, WHO WANTED THE INCIDENT SHROUDED IN UTTER SECRECY.

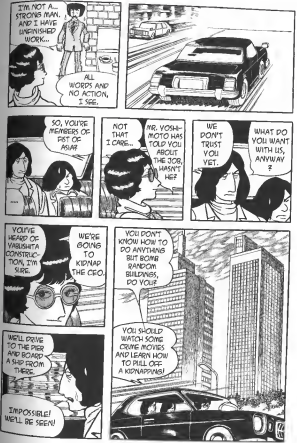

YABUSHITA'S PROBABLY AS TIGHT-LIPPED AS A CLAM.
HE MUST HAVE SEEN IT WHEN NATION X'S OPERATIVES MOVED THE MW GAS ELSEWHERE.

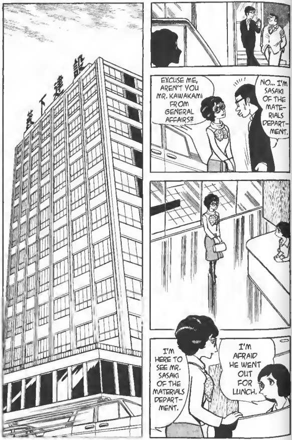

AFTER THAT, OKINO MAFUNE ISLAND GOT A COMPLETE MAKEOVER, AS IF NOTHING HAD EVER HAPPENED THERE. THE BODIES WERE BURIED AND THE STORAGE FACILITY WAS DESTROYED.
I'M GOING TO MAKE HIM TALK
AND FIND OUT WHERE THEY TOOK THE MW.
I'LL NEED YOUR HELP, TOO, FATHER.
NOTHING DIFFICULT—I JUST WANT YOU TO PLACE A CALL TO A CERTAIN CAFÉ AT 1:00.
JUST PLAY THAT TAPE FOR THE PERSON AT THE OTHER END OF THE LINE.

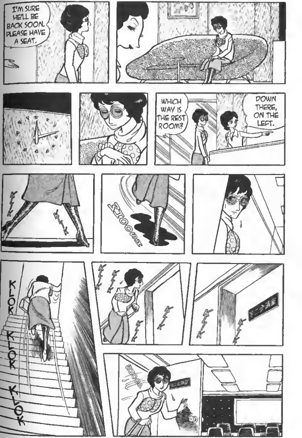

I'LL LET YOU KNOW IF IT WORKS OUT.
I'M COUNTIN' ON YOU, DARLING!
STOP DRESSING UP AS MIHO! IT'S DANGEROUS TO GO AROUND LIKE THAT!
IT'S FOR WORK.

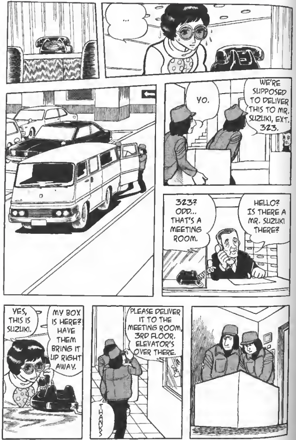

MR. YOSHIMOTO? YOU HAVE A PHONE CALL.
HELLO?
KLIK
MR. YOSHIMOTO, DID YOU SUMMON THE FIST OF ASIA MEMBERS I REQUESTED?
THERE'S A YOUNG LADY AT THE VERY BACK OF THE CAFÉ. SHE'S MY ASSISTANT. HAVE THEM DO AS SHE SAYS.

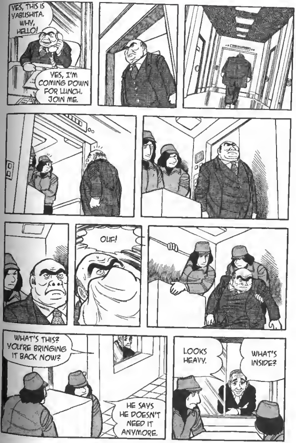

HMM!
...
THAT WAS YOUR BOSS
MR. YOSHIMOTO, THE WRITER! PLEASE, HAVE A SEAT.
THESE ARE THE STUDENT ACTIVISTS.
YES.
I'LL SPEAK WITH THE TWO OF YOU IN MY CAR.
WILL YOU PARTICIPATE IN THIS OPERATION AS WELL, MR. YOSHIMOTO?
MY JOB WAS TO SERVE AS GO-BETWEEN!
BUT THESE PEOPLE ARE YOUR FOLLOWERS!
I'M A THEORIST. I'M NOT AN ACTIVIST!
YOU MEAN TO COME THIS FAR AND RUN AWAY?
LEAVE ME ALONE! I DON'T WANT TO BE INVOLVED!

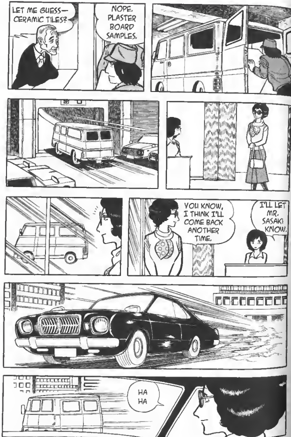

I'M NOT A... STRONG MAN. AND I HAVE UNFINISHED WORK...
ALL WORDS AND NO ACTION, I SEE.
SO, YOU'RE MEMBERS OF FIST OF ASIA?
......
NOT THAT I CARE..
MR. YOSHIMOTO HAS TOLD YOU ABOUT THE JOB, HASN'T HE?
WE DON'T TRUST YOU YET.
WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH US, ANYWAY?
YOU'VE HEARD OF YABUSHITA CONSTRUCTION, I'M SURE.
WE'RE GOING TO KIDNAP THE CEO.
WE'LL DRIVE TO THE PIER AND BOARD A SHIP FROM THERE.
IMPOSSIBLE! WE'LL BE SEEN!
YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TO DO ANYTHING BUT BOMB RANDOM BUILDINGS, DO YOU?
YOU SHOULD WATCH SOME CRIME MOVIES AND LEARN HOW TO PULL OFF A KIDNAPPING!

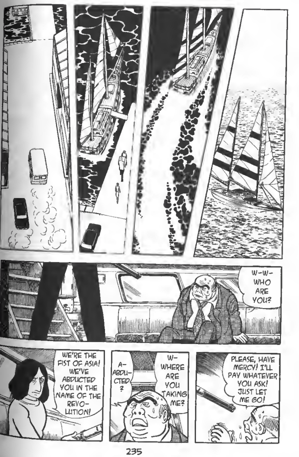

EXCUSE ME, AREN'T YOU MR. KAWAKAMI FROM GENERAL AFFAIRS?
NO... I'M SASAKI OF THE MATERIALS DEPARTMENT.
I'M HERE TO SEE MR. SASAKI OF THE MATERIALS DEPARTMENT.
I'M AFRAID HE WENT OUT FOR LUNCH.

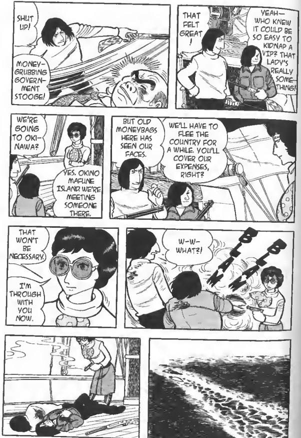

I'M SURE HE'LL BE BACK SOON. PLEASE HAVE A SEAT.
WHICH WAY IS THE REST ROOM?
DOWN THERE, ON THE LEFT.
KLIK KLIK
SHOOSH
KLOK KLOK KLOK KLOK
KLIK KLIK KLIK
KLIK KLIK
SHOOP

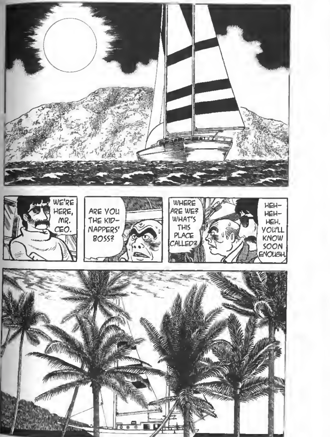

...
YO.
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO DELIVER THIS TO MR. SUZUKI, EXT. 323.
HELLO? IS THERE A MR. SUZUKI THERE?
323? ODD... THAT'S A MEETING ROOM.
YES, THIS IS SUZUKI.
MY BOX IS HERE? HAVE THEM BRING IT UP RIGHT AWAY.
PLEASE DELIVER IT TO THE MEETING ROOM, 3RD FLOOR. ELEVATOR'S OVER THERE.
THANKS

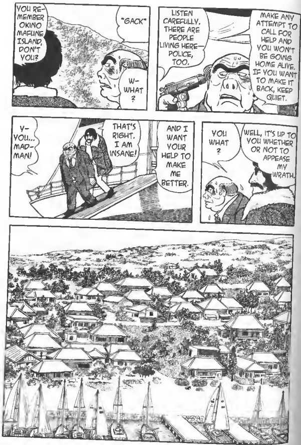

YES, THIS IS YABUSHITA. WHY, HELLO!
YES, I'M COMING DOWN FOR LUNCH. JOIN ME.
OUF!
WHAT'S THIS? YOU'RE BRINGING IT BACK NOW?
HE SAYS HE DOESN'T NEED IT ANYMORE.
LOOKS HEAVY.
WHAT'S INSIDE?


LET ME GUESS— CERAMIC TILES?
NOPE. PLASTER BOARD SAMPLES.
YOU KNOW, I THINK I'LL COME BACK ANOTHER TIME.
I'LL LET MR. SASAKI KNOW.
HA HA


W-W- WHO ARE YOU?
WE'RE THE FIST OF ASIA! WE'VE ABDUCTED YOU IN THE NAME OF THE REVOLUTION!
A- ABDUCTED ?
W- WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME?
PLEASE, HAVE MERCY! I'LL PAY WHATEVER YOU ASK! JUST LET ME GO!

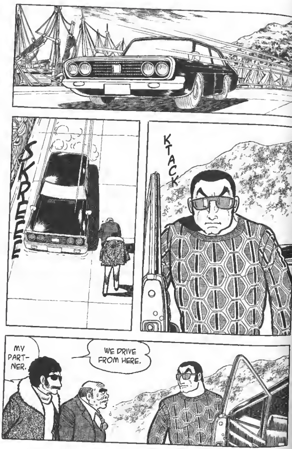

SHUT UP!
MONEY-GRUBBING GOVERNMENT STOOGE!
THAT FELT GREAT!
YEAH— WHO KNEW IT COULD BE SO EASY TO KIDNAP A VIP? THAT LADY'S REALLY SOMETHING!
WE'RE GOING TO OKINAWA?
YES. OKINO MAFUNE ISLAND. WE'RE MEETING SOMEONE THERE.
BUT OLD MONEYBAGS HERE HAS SEEN OUR FACES.
WE'LL HAVE TO FLEE THE COUNTRY FOR A WHILE. YOU'LL COVER OUR EXPENSES, RIGHT?
THAT WON'T BE NECESSARY.
I'M THROUGH WITH YOU NOW.
W-W-WHAT?!
BLAM
BLAM

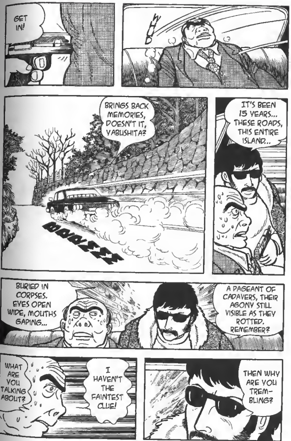

WE'RE HERE, MR. CEO.
ARE YOU THE KIDNAPPERS' BOSS?
WHERE ARE WE? WHAT'S THIS PLACE CALLED?
HEH-HEH-HEH. YOU'LL KNOW SOON ENOUGH.

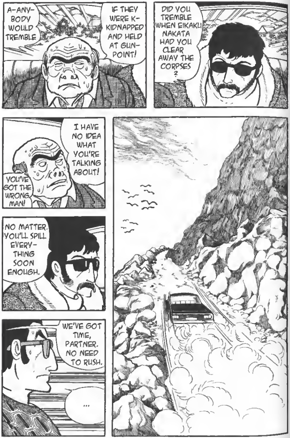

YOU REMEMBER OKINO MAFUNE ISLAND, DON'T YOU?
"GACK"
W-WHAT?
LISTEN CAREFULLY. THERE ARE PEOPLE LIVING HERE—POLICE, TOO.
MAKE ANY ATTEMPT TO CALL FOR HELP AND YOU WON'T BE GOING HOME ALIVE. IF YOU WANT TO MAKE IT BACK, KEEP QUIET.
Y-YOU... MADMAN!
THAT'S RIGHT. I AM INSANE!
AND I WANT YOUR HELP TO MAKE ME BETTER.
YOU WHAT?
WELL, IT'S UP TO YOU WHETHER OR NOT TO APPEASE MY WRATH.

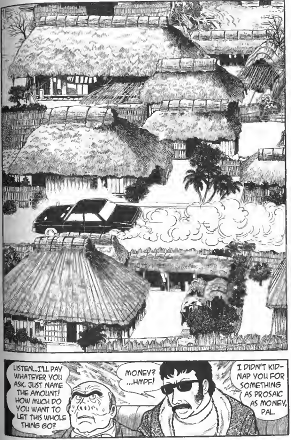
CHAPTER TWELVE

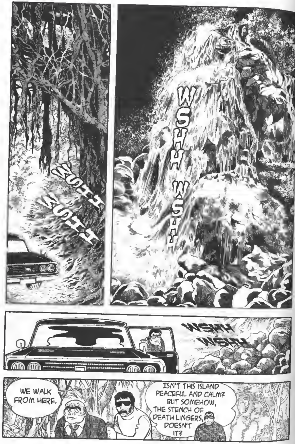
RUINS

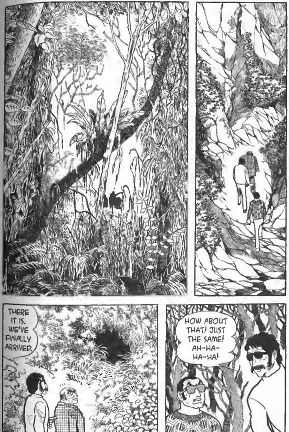

SKREEEE
KTACK
MY PARTNER.
WE DRIVE FROM HERE.

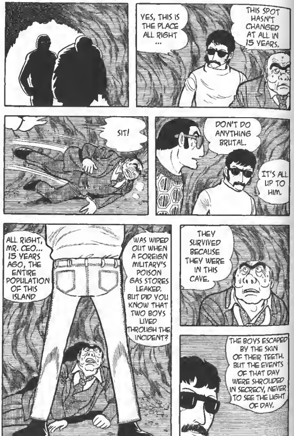

GET IN!
WHUD
BRINGS BACK MEMORIES, DOESN'T IT, YABUSHITA?
IT'S BEEN 15 YEARS... THESE ROADS, THIS ENTIRE ISLAND...
BURIED IN CORPSES. EYES OPEN WIDE, MOUTHS GAPING...
A PAGEANT OF CADAVERS, THEIR AGONY STILL VISIBLE AS THEY ROTTED. REMEMBER?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
I HAVEN'T THE FAINTEST CLUE!
THEN WHY ARE YOU TREMBLING?

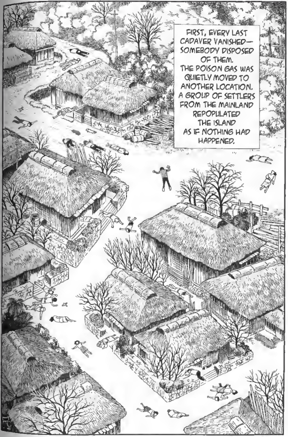

A-ANYBODY WOULD TREMBLE
IF THEY WERE K-KIDNAPPED AND HELD AT GUNPOINT!
DID YOU TREMBLE WHEN EIKAKU NAKATA HAD YOU CLEAR AWAY THE CORPSES?
I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT!
YOU'VE GOT THE WRONG MAN!
NO MATTER. YOU'LL SPILL EVERYTHING SOON ENOUGH.
WE'VE GOT TIME, PARTNER. NO NEED TO RUSH.
...

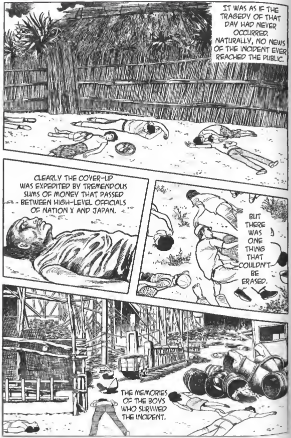

LISTEN...I'LL PAY WHATEVER YOU ASK. JUST NAME THE AMOUNT! HOW MUCH DO YOU WANT TO LET THIS WHOLE THING GO?
MONEY? ...HMPF!
I DIDN'T KIDNAP YOU FOR SOMETHING AS PROSAIC AS MONEY, PAL.

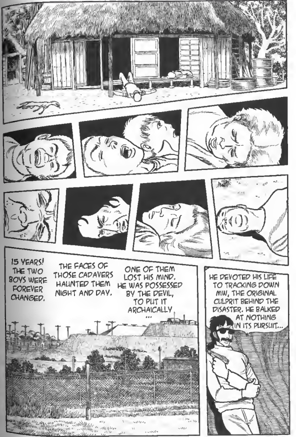

WSHH
WSHH
WSHH WSHH
WSHH
WSHH
WE WALK FROM HERE.
ISN'T THIS ISLAND PEACEFUL AND CALM? BUT SOMEHOW, THE STENCH OF DEATH LINGERS, DOESN'T IT?

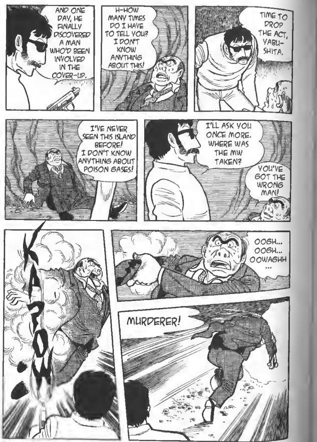

THERE IT IS. WE'VE FINALLY ARRIVED.
HOW ABOUT THAT! JUST THE SAME! AH-HA-HA-HA!

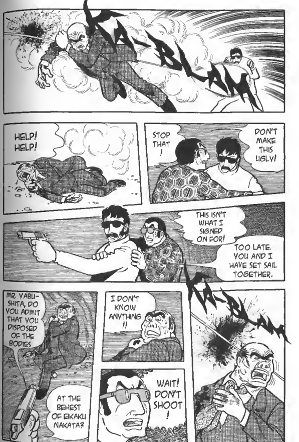

YES, THIS IS THE PLACE ALL RIGHT ...
THIS SPOT HASN'T CHANGED AT ALL IN 15 YEARS.
SIT!
DON'T DO ANYTHING BRUTAL.
IT'S ALL UP TO HIM.
ALL RIGHT, MR. CEO... 15 YEARS AGO, THE ENTIRE POPULATION OF THIS ISLAND
WAS WIPED OUT WHEN A FOREIGN MILITARY'S POISON GAS STORES LEAKED. BUT DID YOU KNOW THAT TWO BOYS LIVED THROUGH THE INCIDENT?
THEY SURVIVED BECAUSE THEY WERE IN THIS CAVE.
THE BOYS ESCAPED BY THE SKIN OF THEIR TEETH. BUT THE EVENTS OF THAT DAY WERE SHROUDED IN SECRECY, NEVER TO SEE THE LIGHT OF DAY.

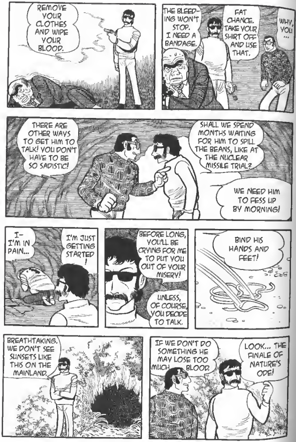

FIRST, EVERY LAST CADAVER VANISHED—SOMEBODY DISPOSED OF THEM. THE POISON GAS WAS QUIETLY MOVED TO ANOTHER LOCATION. A GROUP OF SETTLERS FROM THE MAINLAND REPOPULATED THE ISLAND AS IF NOTHING HAD HAPPENED.

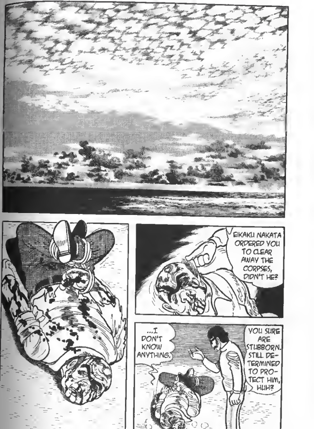

IT WAS AS IF THE TRAGEDY OF THAT DAY HAD NEVER OCCURRED. NATURALLY, NO NEWS OF THE INCIDENT EVER REACHED THE PUBLIC.
CLEARLY THE COVER-UP WAS EXPEDITED BY TREMENDOUS SUMS OF MONEY THAT PASSED BETWEEN HIGH-LEVEL OFFICIALS OF NATION X AND JAPAN.
BUT THERE WAS ONE THING THAT COULDN'T BE ERASED.
THE MEMORIES OF THE BOYS WHO SURVIVED THE INCIDENT.

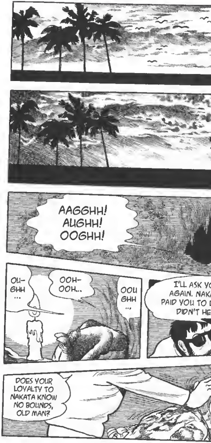

15 YEARS! THE TWO BOYS WERE FOREVER CHANGED.
THE FACES OF THOSE CADAVERS HAUNTED THEM NIGHT AND DAY.
ONE OF THEM LOST HIS MIND. HE WAS POSSESSED BY THE DEVIL, TO PUT IT ARCHAICALLY ...
HE DEVOTED HIS LIFE TO TRACKING DOWN MW, THE ORIGINAL CULPRIT BEHIND THE DISASTER. HE BALKED AT NOTHING IN ITS PURSUIT...

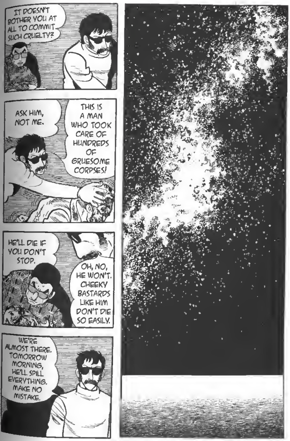

AND ONE DAY, HE FINALLY DISCOVERED A MAN WHO'D BEEN INVOLVED IN THE COVER-UP.
H-HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU? I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THIS!
TIME TO DROP THE ACT, YABUSHITA.
I'VE NEVER SEEN THIS ISLAND BEFORE! I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT POISON GASES!
I'LL ASK YOU ONCE MORE. WHERE WAS THE MW TAKEN?
YOU'VE GOT THE WRONG MAN!
KA-POW
OOGH... OOGH... OOWAGHH ...
MURDERER!

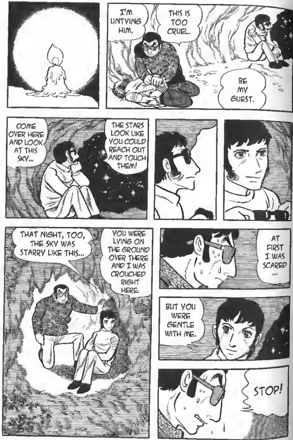

KA-BLAM
HELP! HELP!
STOP THAT!
DON'T MAKE THIS UGLY!
THIS ISN'T WHAT I SIGNED ON FOR!
TOO LATE. YOU AND I HAVE SET SAIL TOGETHER.
MR. YABUSHITA, DO YOU ADMIT THAT YOU DISPOSED OF THE BODIES
AT THE BEHEST OF EIKAKU NAKATA?
I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING !!
WAIT! DON'T SHOOT!
KA-BLAM

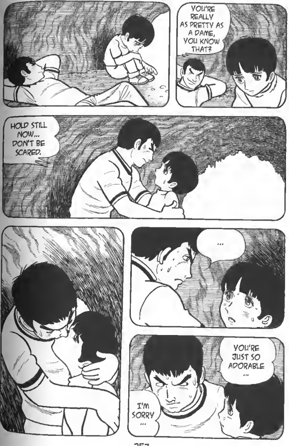

REMOVE YOUR CLOTHES AND WIPE YOUR BLOOD.
THE BLEEDING WON'T STOP. I NEED A BANDAGE.
FAT CHANCE. TAKE YOUR SHIRT OFF AND USE THAT.
WHY, YOU ...
THERE ARE OTHER WAYS TO GET HIM TO TALK! YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE SO SADISTIC!
SHALL WE SPEND MONTHS WAITING FOR HIM TO SPILL THE BEANS, LIKE AT THE NUCLEAR MISSILE TRIAL?
WE NEED HIM TO FESS UP BY MORNING!
I- I'M IN PAIN...
I'M JUST GETTING STARTED!
BEFORE LONG, YOU'LL BE CRYING FOR ME TO PUT YOU OUT OF YOUR MISERY!
UNLESS, OF COURSE, YOU DECIDE TO TALK.
BIND HIS HANDS AND FEET!
BREATHTAKING. WE DON'T SEE SUNSETS LIKE THIS ON THE MAINLAND.
LOOK... THE FINALE OF NATURE'S ODE!
IF WE DON'T DO SOMETHING HE MAY LOSE TOO MUCH BLOOD.

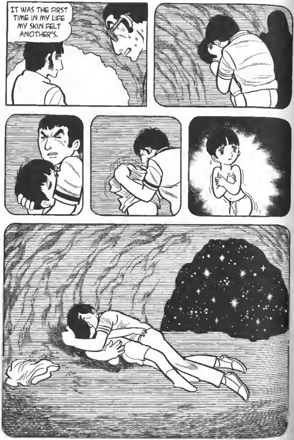

EIKAKU NAKATA ORDERED YOU TO CLEAR AWAY THE CORPSES, DIDN'T HE?
...I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING.
YOU SURE ARE STUBBORN. STILL DETERMINED TO PROTECT HIM, HUH?


AAGGHH! AUGHH! OOGHH!
OU-GHH ...
OOH-OOH...
OOU GHH ...
I'LL ASK YOU AGAIN. NAKATA PAID YOU TO DO IT, DIDN'T HE?
N-N-NO...
DOES YOUR LOYALTY TO NAKATA KNOW NO BOUNDS, OLD MAN?
GRIND GRIND GRIND


IT DOESN'T BOTHER YOU AT ALL TO COMMIT SUCH CRUELTY?
ASK HIM, NOT ME.
THIS IS A MAN WHO TOOK CARE OF HUNDREDS OF GRUESOME CORPSES!
HE'LL DIE IF YOU DON'T STOP.
OH, NO, HE WON'T. CHEEKY BASTARDS LIKE HIM DON'T DIE SO EASILY.
WE'RE ALMOST THERE. TOMORROW MORNING, HE'LL SPILL EVERYTHING. MAKE NO MISTAKE.

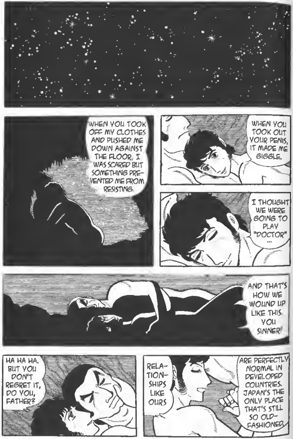

I'M UNTYING HIM.
THIS IS TOO CRUEL.
BE MY GUEST.
COME OVER HERE AND LOOK AT THIS SKY...
THE STARS LOOK LIKE YOU COULD REACH OUT AND TOUCH THEM!
THAT NIGHT, TOO, THE SKY WAS STARRY LIKE THIS...
YOU WERE LYING ON THE GROUND OVER THERE AND I WAS CROUCHED RIGHT HERE.
AT FIRST I WAS SCARED ...
BUT YOU WERE GENTLE WITH ME.
STOP!

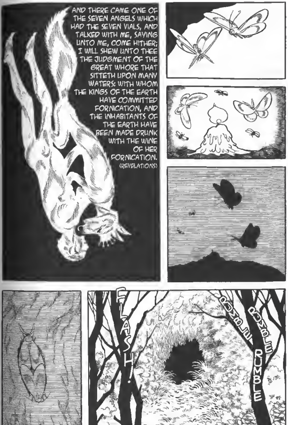

YOU'RE REALLY AS PRETTY AS A DAME, YOU KNOW THAT?
HOLD STILL NOW... DON'T BE SCARED.
...
YOU'RE JUST SO ADORABLE ...
I'M SORRY ...

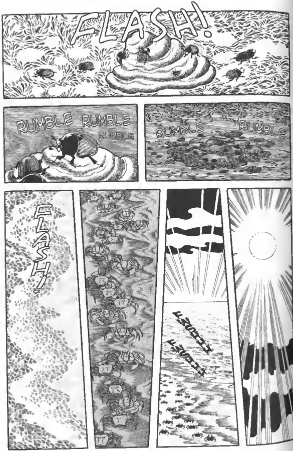

IT WAS THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE MY SKIN FELT ANOTHER'S.

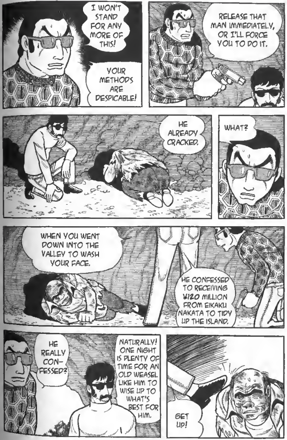
CHAPTER THIRTEEN

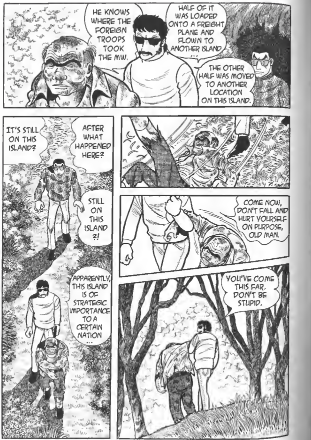
ISLAND'S END

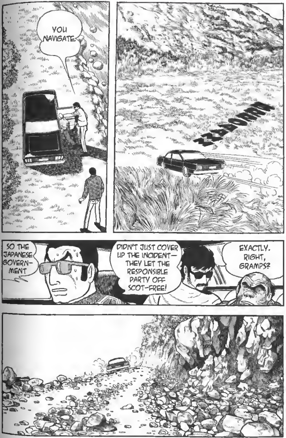

WHEN YOU TOOK OFF MY CLOTHES AND PUSHED ME DOWN AGAINST THE FLOOR, I WAS SCARED BUT SOMETHING PREVENTED ME FROM RESISTING.
WHEN YOU TOOK OUT YOUR PENIS, IT MADE ME GIGGLE.
I THOUGHT WE WERE GOING TO PLAY "DOCTOR"...
AND THAT'S HOW WE WOUND UP LIKE THIS. YOU SINNER!
HA HA HA. BUT YOU DON'T REGRET IT, DO YOU, FATHER?
RELATIONSHIPS LIKE OURS
ARE PERFECTLY NORMAL IN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES. JAPAN'S THE ONLY PLACE THAT'S STILL SO OLD-FASHIONED.

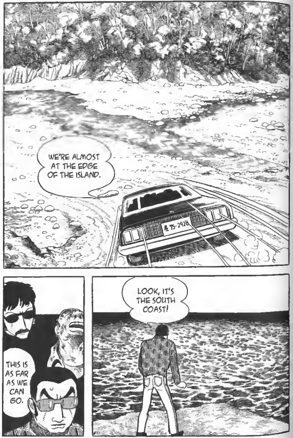

AND THERE CAME ONE OF THE SEVEN ANGELS WHICH HAD THE SEVEN VIALS, AND TALKED WITH ME, SAYING UNTO ME, COME HITHER; I WILL SHEW UNTO THEE THE JUDGMENT OF THE GREAT WHORE THAT SITTETH UPON MANY WATERS: WITH WHOM THE KINGS OF THE EARTH HAVE COMMITTED FORNICATION, AND THE INHABITANTS OF THE EARTH HAVE BEEN MADE DRUNK WITH THE WINE OF HER FORNICATION.
(REVELATIONS)
FLASH!
RUMBLE
RUMBLE

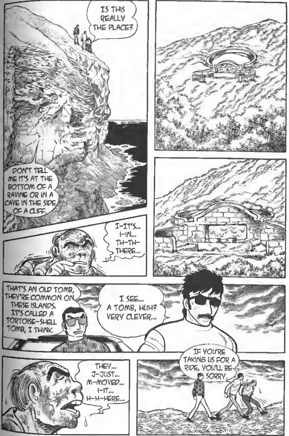

FLASH!
RUMBLE RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
FLASH!

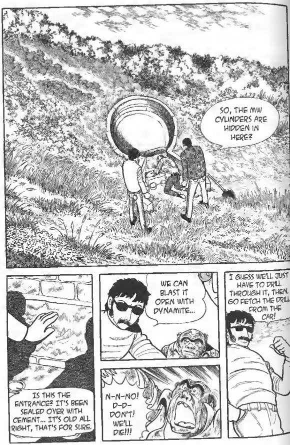

I WON'T STAND FOR ANY MORE OF THIS!
YOUR METHODS ARE DESPICABLE!
RELEASE THAT MAN IMMEDIATELY, OR I'LL FORCE YOU TO DO IT.
HE ALREADY CRACKED.
WHAT?
WHEN YOU WENT DOWN INTO THE VALLEY TO WASH YOUR FACE.
HE CONFESSED TO RECEIVING ¥120 MILLION FROM EIKAKU NAKATA TO TIDY UP THE ISLAND.
HE REALLY CONFESSED?
NATURALLY! ONE NIGHT IS PLENTY OF TIME FOR AN OLD WEASEL LIKE HIM TO WISE UP TO WHAT'S BEST FOR HIM.
GET UP!

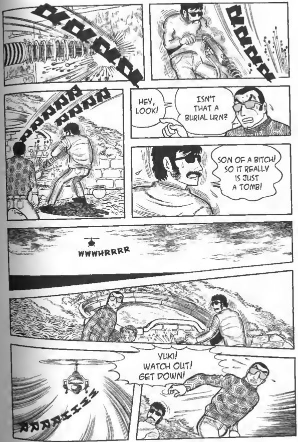

HE KNOWS WHERE THE FOREIGN TROOPS TOOK THE MW.
HALF OF IT WAS LOADED ONTO A FREIGHT PLANE AND FLOWN TO ANOTHER ISLAND ...
THE OTHER HALF WAS MOVED TO ANOTHER LOCATION ON THIS ISLAND.
IT'S STILL ON THIS ISLAND?
AFTER WHAT HAPPENED HERE?
STILL ON THIS ISLAND ?!
APPARENTLY, THIS ISLAND IS OF STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE TO A CERTAIN NATION ...
COME NOW, DON'T FALL AND HURT YOURSELF ON PURPOSE, OLD MAN.
YOU'VE COME THIS FAR. DON'T BE STUPID.

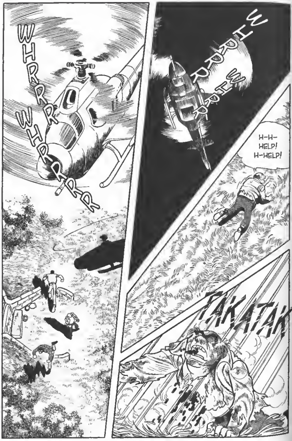

YOU NAVIGATE.
SO THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT
DIDN'T JUST COVER UP THE INCIDENT— THEY LET THE RESPONSIBLE PARTY OFF SCOT-FREE!
EXACTLY. RIGHT, GRAMPS?

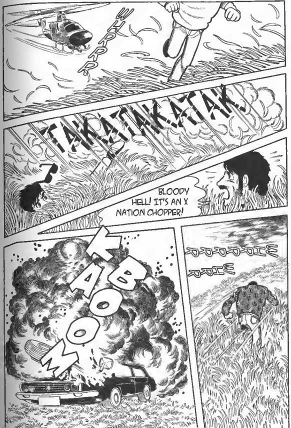

WE'RE ALMOST AT THE EDGE OF THE ISLAND.
THIS IS AS FAR AS WE CAN GO.
LOOK, IT'S THE SOUTH COAST!

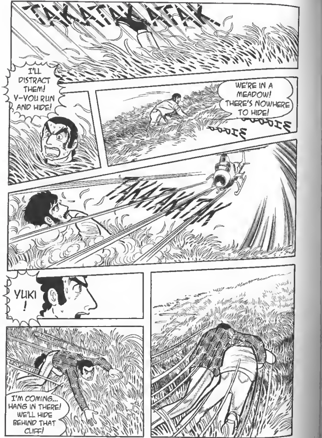

IS THIS REALLY THE PLACE?
DON'T TELL ME IT'S AT THE BOTTOM OF A RAVINE OR IN A CAVE IN THE SIDE OF A CLIFF.
I-IT'S... I-IN... TH-TH-THERE...
THAT'S AN OLD TOMB, THEY'RE COMMON ON THESE ISLANDS. IT'S CALLED A TORTOISE-SHELL TOMB, I THINK.
I SEE... A TOMB, HUH? VERY CLEVER...
THEY... J-JUST... M-MOVED... I-IT... H-H-HERE...
IF YOU'RE TAKING US FOR A RIDE, YOU'LL BE SORRY.

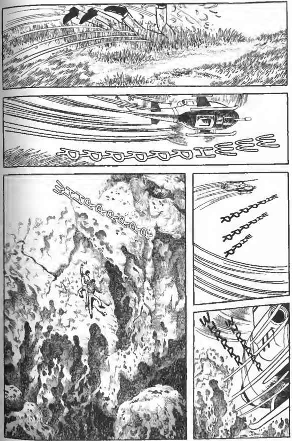

SO, THE MW CYLINDERS ARE HIDDEN IN HERE?
IS THIS THE ENTRANCE? IT'S BEEN SEALED OVER WITH CEMENT... IT'S OLD ALL RIGHT, THAT'S FOR SURE.
WE CAN BLAST IT OPEN WITH DYNAMITE...
N-N-NO! D-D-DON'T! WE'LL DIE!!!
I GUESS WE'LL JUST HAVE TO DRILL THROUGH IT, THEN. GO FETCH THE DRILL FROM THE CAR!

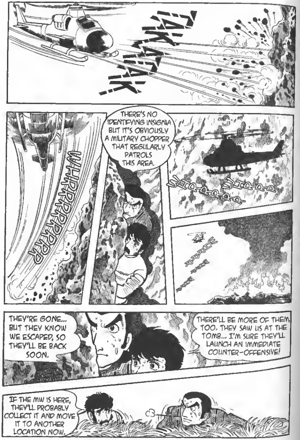

HEY, LOOK!
ISN'T THAT A BURIAL URN?
SON OF A BITCH! SO IT REALLY IS JUST A TOMB!
WWWHRRRR
YUKI! WATCH OUT! GET DOWN!

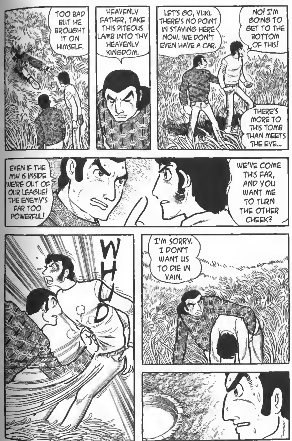

WHRRR
WHRRR
WHRRRR
WHRRR
WHRRR
H-H-HELP! H-HELP!
TAKATAK

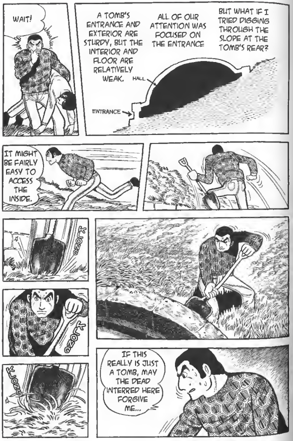

WHRRR
TAKATAKATAK
BLOODY HELL! IT'S AN X NATION CHOPPER!
KABOOM
D-D-D-D-DIE
D-DIE

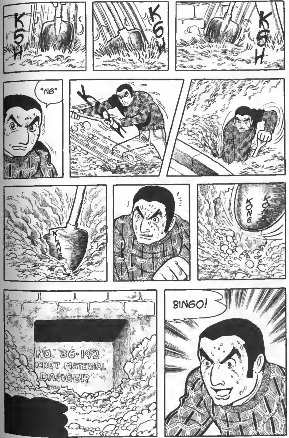

TAKATAKATAK
I'LL DISTRACT THEM! Y-YOU RUN AND HIDE!
WE'RE IN A MEADOW! THERE'S NOWHERE TO HIDE!
TAKATAKATAK
YUKI!
I'M COMING... HANG IN THERE! WE'LL HIDE BEHIND THAT CLIFF!

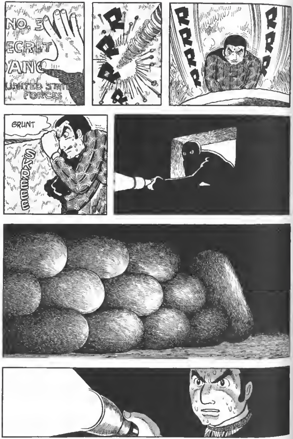



TAK TAK TAK
THERE'S NO IDENTIFYING INSIGNIA BUT IT'S OBVIOUSLY A MILITARY CHOPPER THAT REGULARLY PATROLS THIS AREA.
WHIRRRRRRRRR
THEY'RE GONE... BUT THEY KNOW WE ESCAPED, SO THEY'LL BE BACK SOON.
THERE'LL BE MORE OF THEM, TOO. THEY SAW US AT THE TOMB... I'M SURE THEY'LL LAUNCH AN IMMEDIATE COUNTER-OFFENSIVE!
IF THE MW IS HERE, THEY'LL PROBABLY COLLECT IT AND MOVE IT TO ANOTHER LOCATION NOW.


TOO BAD BUT HE BROUGHT IT ON HIMSELF.
HEAVENLY FATHER, TAKE THIS PITEOUS LAMB INTO THY HEAVENLY KINGDOM.
LET'S GO, YUKI. THERE'S NO POINT IN STAYING HERE NOW. WE DON'T EVEN HAVE A CAR.
NO! I'M GOING TO GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS!
THERE'S MORE TO THIS TOMB THAN MEETS THE EYE...
EVEN IF THE MW IS INSIDE WE'RE OUT OF OUR LEAGUE! THE ENEMY'S FAR TOO POWERFUL!
WE'VE COME THIS FAR, AND YOU WANT ME TO TURN THE OTHER CHEEK?
WHUD
I'M SORRY. I DON'T WANT US TO DIE IN VAIN.

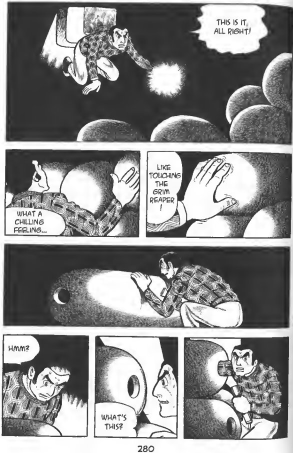

WAIT!
A TOMB'S ENTRANCE AND EXTERIOR ARE STURDY, BUT THE INTERIOR AND FLOOR ARE RELATIVELY WEAK.
ALL OF OUR ATTENTION WAS FOCUSED ON THE ENTRANCE
BUT WHAT IF I TRIED DIGGING THROUGH THE SLOPE AT THE TOMB'S REAR?
HALL
ENTRANCE
IT MIGHT BE FAIRLY EASY TO ACCESS THE INSIDE.
KLONG
KLONG
KLONG
IF THIS REALLY IS JUST A TOMB, MAY THE DEAD INTERRED HERE FORGIVE ME...

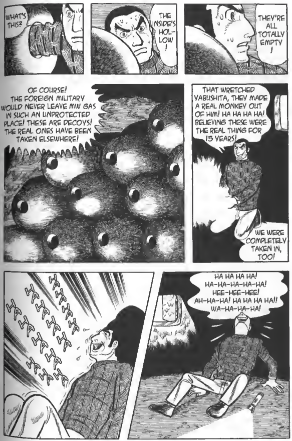

KSH
KSH
KSH
"NG"
KLANG
KONG
KOA
NO. 36-192
CRET MATERIAL
DANGER
BINGO!

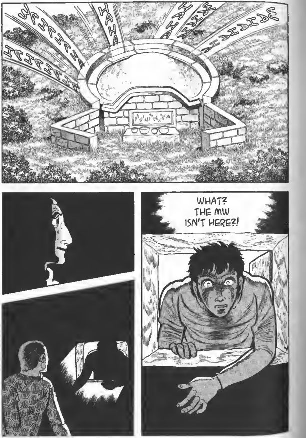

NO. 3
ECRET
ANC
UNITED STATE
FORCES
RRRR
RRRR
RRR
GRUNT
SKREEEE

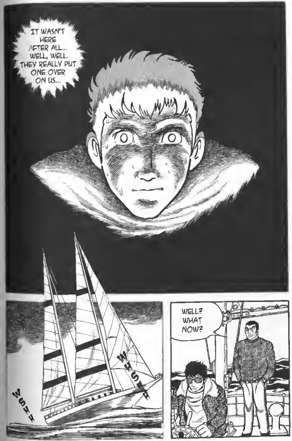
CHAPTER FOURTEEN

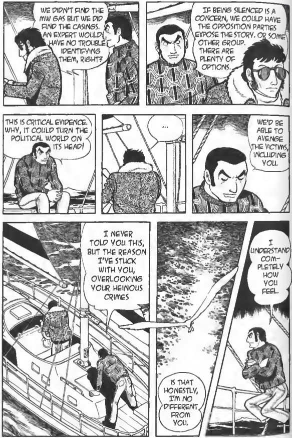
REUNION

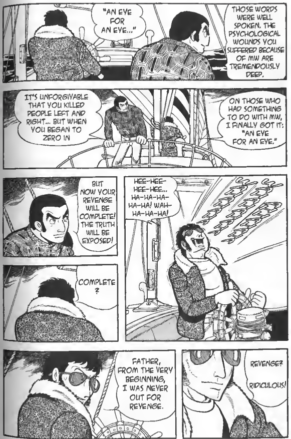

THIS IS IT, ALL RIGHT!
WHAT A CHILLING FEELING...
LIKE TOUCHING THE GRIM REAPER!
HMM?
WHAT'S THIS?

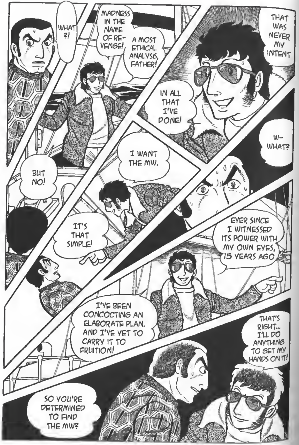

WHAT'S THIS?
THE INSIDE'S HOL-LOW!
THEY'RE ALL TOTALLY EMPTY!
OF COURSE! THE FOREIGN MILITARY WOULD NEVER LEAVE MW GAS IN SUCH AN UNPROTECTED PLACE! THESE ARE DECOYS! THE REAL ONES HAVE BEEN TAKEN ELSEWHERE!
THAT WRETCHED YABUSHITA, THEY MADE A REAL MONKEY OUT OF HIM! HA HA HA HA! BELIEVING THESE WERE THE REAL THING FOR 15 YEARS!
WE WERE COMPLETELY TAKEN IN, TOO!
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA
HA HA HA HA! HA-HA-HA-HA-HA! HEE-HEE-HEE! AH-HA-HA! HA HA HA HA!! WA-HA-HA-HA!

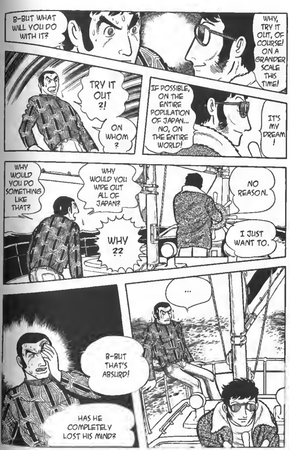

WAHAHAHAHA
HAHAHAHAHA
HAHA
HAHA
WAHAHA
WAHAHAHAHA
WHAT? THE MW ISN'T HERE?!

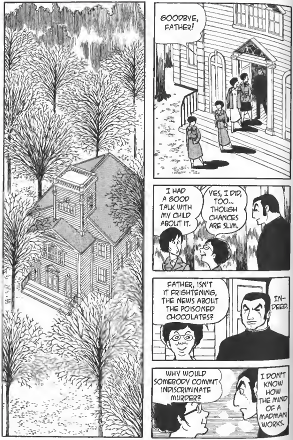

IT WASN'T HERE AFTER ALL... WELL, WELL. THEY REALLY PUT ONE OVER ON US...
WSHH
WSHH
WELL? WHAT NOW?

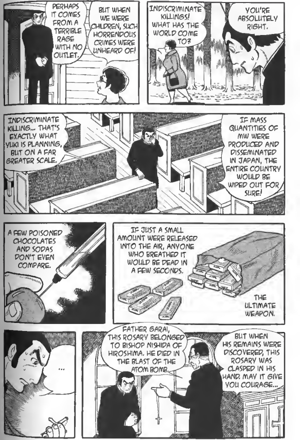

WE DIDN'T FIND THE MW GAS BUT WE DID FIND THE CASINGS. AN EXPERT WOULD HAVE NO TROUBLE IDENTIFYING THEM, RIGHT?
IF BEING SILENCED IS A CONCERN, WE COULD HAVE THE OPPOSITION PARTIES EXPOSE THE STORY. OR SOME OTHER GROUP. THERE ARE PLENTY OF OPTIONS.
THIS IS CRITICAL EVIDENCE. WHY, IT COULD TURN THE POLITICAL WORLD ON ITS HEAD!
...
WE'D BE ABLE TO AVENGE THE VICTIMS, INCLUDING YOU.
I NEVER TOLD YOU THIS, BUT THE REASON I'VE STUCK WITH YOU, OVERLOOKING YOUR HEINOUS CRIMES
IS THAT HONESTLY, I'M NO DIFFERENT FROM YOU.
I UNDERSTAND COMPLETELY HOW YOU FEEL.

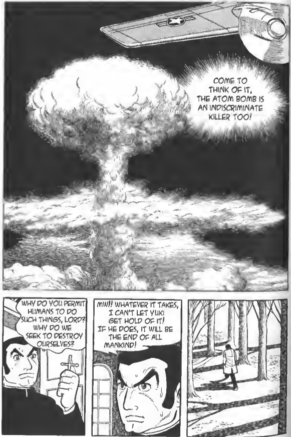

"AN EYE FOR AN EYE..."
THOSE WORDS WERE WELL SPOKEN. THE PSYCHOLOGICAL WOUNDS YOU SUFFERED BECAUSE OF MW ARE TREMENDOUSLY DEEP.
IT'S UNFORGIVABLE THAT YOU KILLED PEOPLE LEFT AND RIGHT... BUT WHEN YOU BEGAN TO ZERO IN
ON THOSE WHO HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH MW, I FINALLY GOT IT: "AN EYE FOR AN EYE."
BUT NOW YOUR REVENGE WILL BE COMPLETE! THE TRUTH WILL BE EXPOSED!
HEE-HEE-HEE-HEE... HA-HA-HA-HA-HA! WAH-HA-HA-HA!
COMPLETE?
FATHER, FROM THE VERY BEGINNING, I WAS NEVER OUT FOR REVENGE.
REVENGE?
RIDICULOUS!

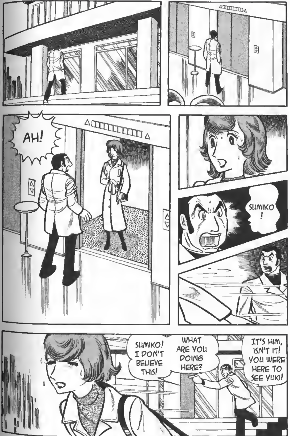

WHAT ?!
MADNESS IN THE NAME OF RE-VENGE!
A MOST ETHICAL ANALYSIS, FATHER!
THAT WAS NEVER MY INTENT
IN ALL THAT I'VE DONE!
BUT NO!
I WANT THE MW.
W-WHAT?
IT'S THAT SIMPLE!
EVER SINCE I WITNESSED ITS POWER WITH MY OWN EYES, 15 YEARS AGO
I'VE BEEN CONCOCTING AN ELABORATE PLAN. AND I'VE YET TO CARRY IT TO FRUITION!
THAT'S RIGHT... I'LL DO ANYTHING TO GET MY HANDS ON IT!
SO YOU'RE DETERMINED TO FIND THE MW?

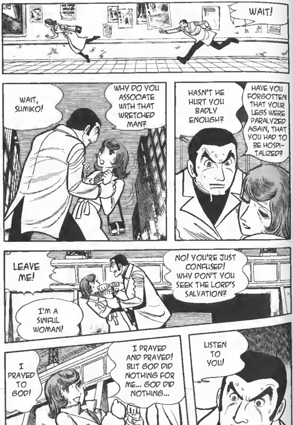

B-BUT WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH IT?
WHY, TRY IT OUT, OF COURSE! ON A GRANDER SCALE THIS TIME!
TRY IT OUT ?!
ON WHOM ?
IF POSSIBLE, ON THE ENTIRE POPULATION OF JAPAN... NO, ON THE ENTIRE WORLD!
IT'S MY DREAM!
WHY WOULD YOU DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT?
WHY WOULD YOU WIPE OUT ALL OF JAPAN?
WHY ??
NO REASON.
I JUST WANT TO.
...
B-BUT THAT'S ABSURD!
HAS HE COMPLETELY LOST HIS MIND?

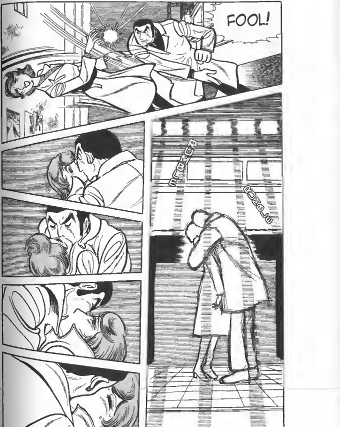

GOODBYE, FATHER!
I HAD A GOOD TALK WITH MY CHILD ABOUT IT.
YES, I DID, TOO... THOUGH CHANCES ARE SLIM.
FATHER, ISN'T IT FRIGHTENING, THE NEWS ABOUT THE POISONED CHOCOLATES?
INDEED.
WHY WOULD SOMEBODY COMMIT INDISCRIMINATE MURDER?
I DON'T KNOW HOW THE MIND OF A MADMAN WORKS.

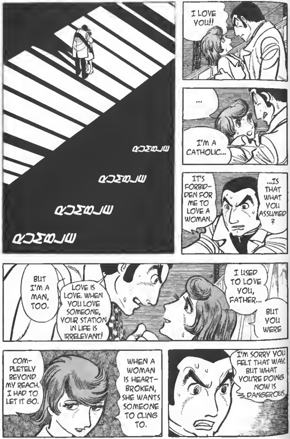

PERHAPS IT COMES FROM A TERRIBLE RAGE WITH NO OUTLET.
BUT WHEN WE WERE CHILDREN, SUCH HORRENDOUS CRIMES WERE UNHEARD OF!
INDISCRIMINATE KILLINGS! WHAT HAS THE WORLD COME TO?
YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY RIGHT.
INDISCRIMINATE KILLING... THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT YUKI IS PLANNING, BUT ON A FAR GREATER SCALE.
IF MASS QUANTITIES OF MW WERE PRODUCED AND DISSEMINATED IN JAPAN, THE ENTIRE COUNTRY WOULD BE WIPED OUT FOR SURE!
A FEW POISONED CHOCOLATES AND SODAS DON'T EVEN COMPARE.
IF JUST A SMALL AMOUNT WERE RELEASED INTO THE AIR, ANYONE WHO BREATHED IT WOULD BE DEAD IN A FEW SECONDS.
THE ULTIMATE WEAPON.
...
FATHER GARAI, THIS ROSARY BELONGED TO BISHOP NISHIDA OF HIROSHIMA. HE DIED IN THE BLAST OF THE ATOM BOMB.
BUT WHEN HIS REMAINS WERE DISCOVERED, THIS ROSARY WAS CLASPED IN HIS HAND. MAY IT GIVE YOU COURAGE...

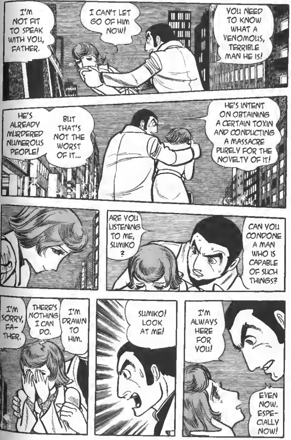

COME TO THINK OF IT, THE ATOM BOMB IS AN INDISCRIMINATE KILLER TOO!
WHY DO YOU PERMIT HUMANS TO DO SUCH THINGS, LORD? WHY DO WE SEEK TO DESTROY OURSELVES?
MW!! WHATEVER IT TAKES, I CAN'T LET YUKI GET HOLD OF IT! IF HE DOES, IT WILL BE THE END OF ALL MANKIND!

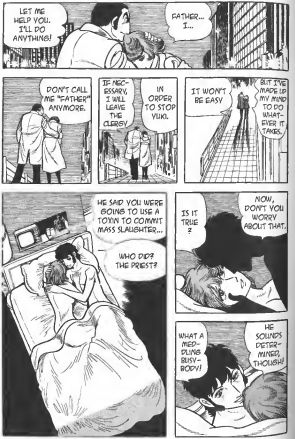

AH!
SUMIKO!
SUMIKO! I DON'T BELIEVE THIS!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
IT'S HIM, ISN'T IT! YOU WERE HERE TO SEE YUKI!

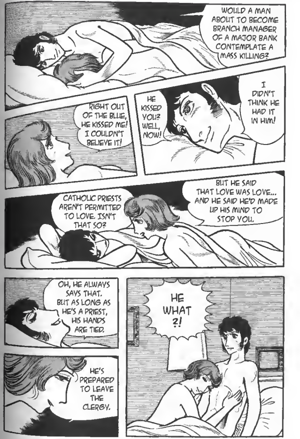

WAIT!
WAIT, SUMIKO!
WHY DO YOU ASSOCIATE WITH THAT WRETCHED MAN?
HASN'T HE HURT YOU BADLY ENOUGH?
HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN THAT YOUR LEGS WERE PARALYZED AGAIN, THAT YOU HAD TO BE HOSPITALIZED?
LEAVE ME!
I'M A SINFUL WOMAN!
NO! YOU'RE JUST CONFUSED! WHY DON'T YOU SEEK THE LORD'S SALVATION?
I PRAYED TO GOD!
I PRAYED AND PRAYED! BUT GOD DID NOTHING FOR ME... GOD DID NOTHING...
LISTEN TO YOU!

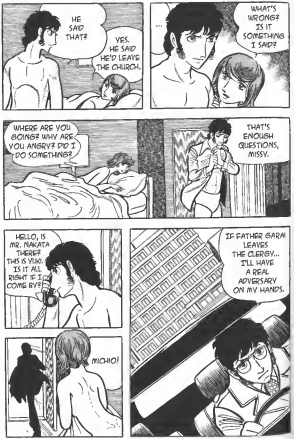

FOOL!
RUMBLE
RUMBLE


I LOVE YOU!!
...
I'M A CATHOLIC...
IT'S FORBIDDEN FOR ME TO LOVE A WOMAN.
...IS THAT WHAT YOU ASSUMED?
BUT I'M A MAN, TOO.
LOVE IS LOVE. WHEN YOU LOVE SOMEONE, YOUR STATION IN LIFE IS IRRELEVANT!
I USED TO LOVE YOU, FATHER...
BUT YOU WERE
COMPLETELY BEYOND MY REACH. I HAD TO LET IT GO.
WHEN A WOMAN IS HEARTBROKEN, SHE WANTS SOMEONE TO CLING TO.
I'M SORRY YOU FELT THAT WAY. BUT WHAT YOU'RE DOING NOW IS DANGEROUS.


I'M NOT FIT TO SPEAK WITH YOU, FATHER.
I CAN'T LET GO OF HIM NOW!
YOU NEED TO KNOW WHAT A VENOMOUS, TERRIBLE MAN HE IS!
HE'S ALREADY MURDERED NUMEROUS PEOPLE!
BUT THAT'S NOT THE WORST OF IT...
HE'S INTENT ON OBTAINING A CERTAIN TOXIN AND CONDUCTING A MASSACRE PURELY FOR THE NOVELTY OF IT!
ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME, SUMIKO?
CAN YOU CONDONE A MAN WHO IS CAPABLE OF SUCH THINGS?
I'M SORRY, FATHER.
THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO.
I'M DRAWN TO HIM.
SUMIKO! LOOK AT ME!
I'M ALWAYS HERE FOR YOU!
EVEN NOW. ESPECIALLY NOW!

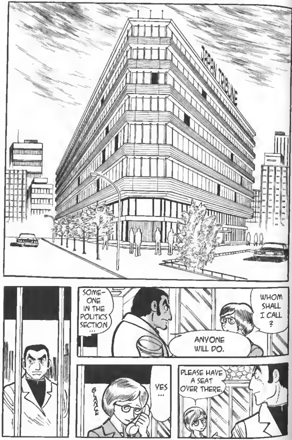

LET ME HELP YOU. I'LL DO ANYTHING!
FATHER... I...
DON'T CALL ME "FATHER" ANYMORE.
IF NECESSARY, I WILL LEAVE THE CLERGY
IN ORDER TO STOP YUKI.
IT WON'T BE EASY
BUT I'VE MADE UP MY MIND TO DO WHATEVER IT TAKES.
HE SAID YOU WERE GOING TO USE A TOXIN TO COMMIT MASS SLAUGHTER...
WHO DID? THE PRIEST?
IS IT TRUE?
NOW, DON'T YOU WORRY ABOUT THAT.
WHAT A MEDDLING BUSYBODY!
HE SOUNDS DETERMINED, THOUGH!

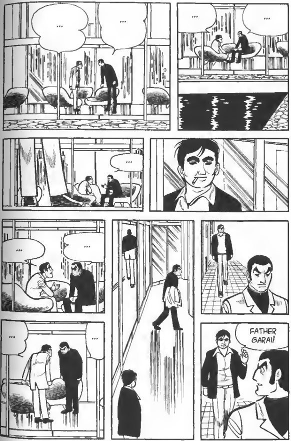

WOULD A MAN ABOUT TO BECOME BRANCH MANAGER OF A MAJOR BANK CONTEMPLATE A MASS KILLING?
RIGHT OUT OF THE BLUE, HE KISSED ME! I COULDN'T BELIEVE IT!
HE KISSED YOU? WELL, NOW!
I DIDN'T THINK HE HAD IT IN HIM!
CATHOLIC PRIESTS AREN'T PERMITTED TO LOVE. ISN'T THAT SO?
BUT HE SAID THAT LOVE WAS LOVE... AND HE SAID HE'D MADE UP HIS MIND TO STOP YOU.
OH, HE ALWAYS SAYS THAT. BUT AS LONG AS HE'S A PRIEST, HIS HANDS ARE TIED.
HE'S PREPARED TO LEAVE THE CLERGY.
HE WHAT?!


HE SAID THAT?
YES. HE SAID HE'D LEAVE THE CHURCH.
...
WHAT'S WRONG? IS IT SOMETHING I SAID?
WHERE ARE YOU GOING? WHY ARE YOU ANGRY? DID I DO SOMETHING?
THAT'S ENOUGH QUESTIONS, MISSY.
HELLO, IS MR. NAKATA THERE? THIS IS YUKI. IS IT ALL RIGHT IF I COME BY?
MICHIO!
IF FATHER GARAI LEAVES THE CLERGY... I'LL HAVE A REAL ADVERSARY ON MY HANDS.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

COOPERATOR


JAPAN TRIBUNE
SOME-ONE IN THE POLITICS SECTION ...
WHOM SHALL I CALL ?
ANYONE WILL DO.
GLANCE
YES ...
PLEASE HAVE A SEAT OVER THERE.


...
...
...
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...
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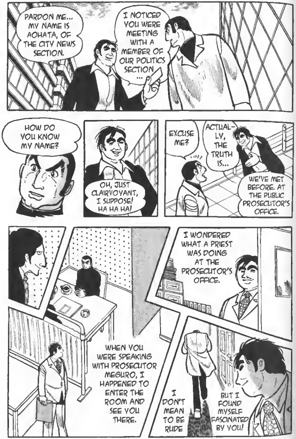
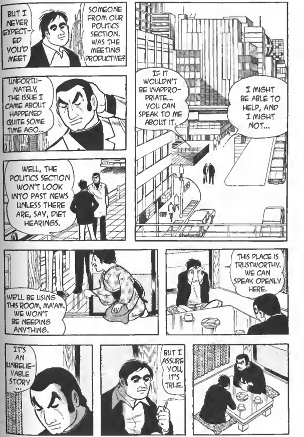
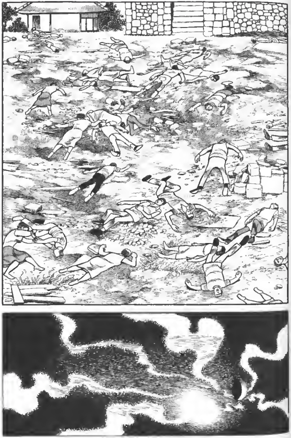
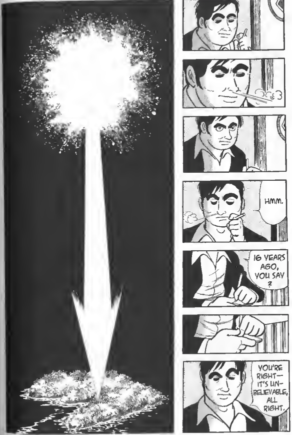
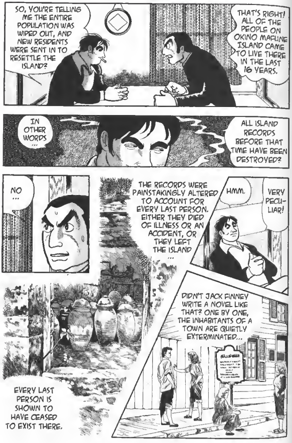
...
...
...
FATHER GARAI!

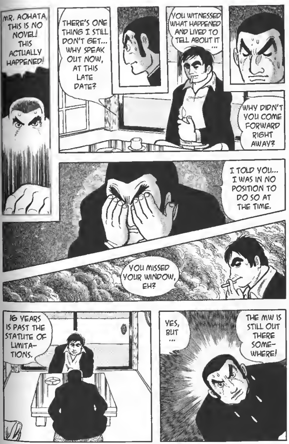

PARDON ME... MY NAME IS AOHATA, OF THE CITY NEWS SECTION.
I NOTICED YOU WERE MEETING WITH A MEMBER OF OUR POLITICS SECTION...
HOW DO YOU KNOW MY NAME?
OH, JUST CLAIRVOYANT, I SUPPOSE! HA HA HA!
EXCUSE ME?
ACTUALLY, THE TRUTH IS...
WE'VE MET BEFORE. AT THE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE.
I WONDERED WHAT A PRIEST WAS DOING AT THE PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE.
WHEN YOU WERE SPEAKING WITH PROSECUTOR MEGURO, I HAPPENED TO ENTER THE ROOM AND SEE YOU THERE.
I DON'T MEAN TO BE RUDE
BUT I FOUND MYSELF FASCINATED BY YOU!

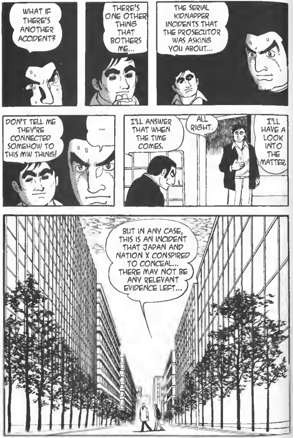

BUT I NEVER EXPECTED YOU'D MEET
SOMEONE FROM OUR POLITICS SECTION. WAS THE MEETING PRODUCTIVE?
UNFORTUNATELY, THE ISSUE I CAME ABOUT HAPPENED QUITE SOME TIME AGO...
WELL, THE POLITICS SECTION WON'T LOOK INTO PAST NEWS UNLESS THERE ARE, SAY, DIET HEARINGS.
IF IT WOULDN'T BE INAPPROPRIATE... YOU CAN SPEAK TO ME ABOUT IT.
I MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP, AND I MIGHT NOT...
WE'LL BE USING THIS ROOM, MA'AM. WE WON'T BE NEEDING ANYTHING.
THIS PLACE IS TRUSTWORTHY. WE CAN SPEAK OPENLY HERE.
IT'S AN UNBELIEVABLE STORY...
BUT I ASSURE YOU, IT'S TRUE.

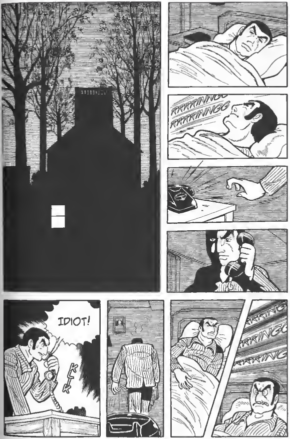


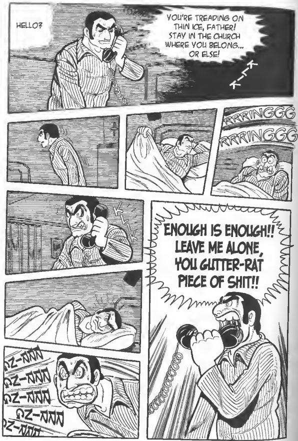

HMM.
16 YEARS AGO, YOU SAY?
YOU'RE RIGHT— IT'S UNBELIEVABLE, ALL RIGHT.

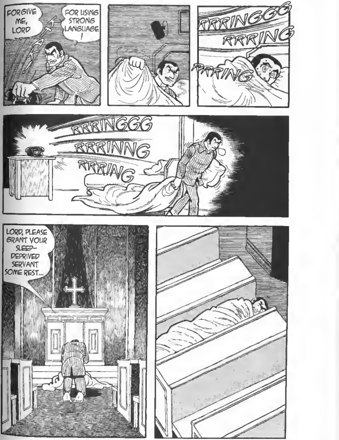

SO, YOU'RE TELLING ME THE ENTIRE POPULATION WAS WIPED OUT, AND NEW RESIDENTS WERE SENT IN TO RESETTLE THE ISLAND?
THAT'S RIGHT! ALL OF THE PEOPLE ON OKINO MAFUNE ISLAND CAME TO LIVE THERE IN THE LAST 16 YEARS.
IN OTHER WORDS ...
ALL ISLAND RECORDS BEFORE THAT TIME HAVE BEEN DESTROYED?
NO ...
THE RECORDS WERE PAINSTAKINGLY ALTERED TO ACCOUNT FOR EVERY LAST PERSON. EITHER THEY DIED OF ILLNESS OR AN ACCIDENT, OR THEY LEFT THE ISLAND ...
HMM.
VERY PECULIAR!
DIDN'T JACK FINNEY WRITE A NOVEL LIKE THAT? ONE BY ONE, THE INHABITANTS OF A TOWN ARE QUIETLY EXTERMINATED...
EVERY LAST PERSON IS SHOWN TO HAVE CEASED TO EXIST THERE.

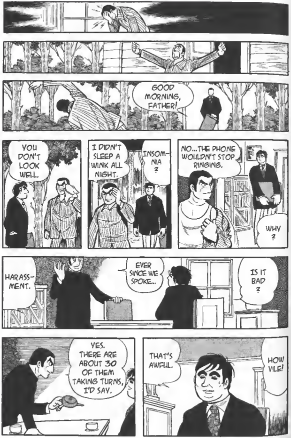

MR. AOHATA, THIS IS NO NOVEL! THIS ACTUALLY HAPPENED!
THERE'S ONE THING I STILL DON'T GET... WHY SPEAK OUT NOW, AT THIS LATE DATE?
YOU WITNESSED WHAT HAPPENED AND LIVED TO TELL ABOUT IT ...
WHY DIDN'T YOU COME FORWARD RIGHT AWAY?
I TOLD YOU... I WAS IN NO POSITION TO DO SO AT THE TIME.
YOU MISSED YOUR WINDOW, EH?
16 YEARS IS PAST THE STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS.
YES, BUT ...
THE MW IS STILL OUT THERE SOMEWHERE!

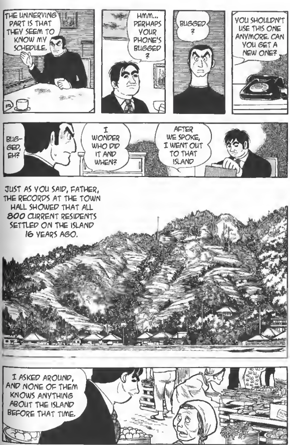

WHAT IF THERE'S ANOTHER ACCIDENT?
THERE'S ONE OTHER THING THAT BOTHERS ME...
THE SERIAL KIDNAPPER INCIDENTS THAT THE PROSECUTOR WAS ASKING YOU ABOUT...
DON'T TELL ME THEY'RE CONNECTED SOMEHOW TO THIS MW THING!
...
I'LL ANSWER THAT WHEN THE TIME COMES.
ALL RIGHT.
I'LL HAVE A LOOK INTO THE MATTER.
BUT IN ANY CASE, THIS IS AN INCIDENT THAT JAPAN AND NATION X CONSPIRED TO CONCEAL... THERE MAY NOT BE ANY RELEVANT EVIDENCE LEFT...

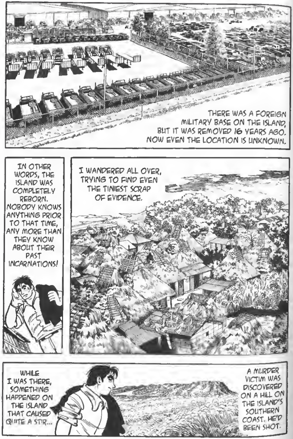

RRRRINNGG
RRRRINNGG
IDIOT!
KLIK
RRRING
RRRING
RRRING

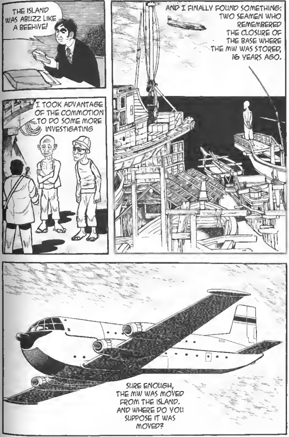

HELLO?
YOU'RE TREADING ON THIN ICE, FATHER! STAY IN THE CHURCH WHERE YOU BELONG... OR ELSE!
KLIK
RRRINGGG
RRRINGGG
KLIK
ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!! LEAVE ME ALONE, YOU GUTTER-RAT PIECE OF SHIT!!
GZ-NNN
GZ-NNN
GZ-NNN
GZ-NNN
GZ-NNN

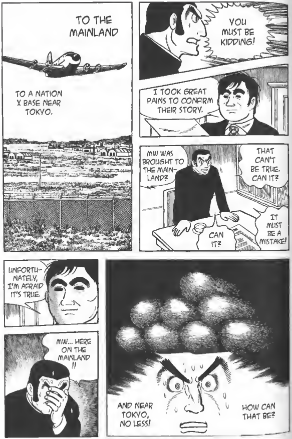

FORGIVE ME, LORD
FOR USING STRONG LANGUAGE!
RRRINGGG
RRRING
RRRING
RRRINGGG
RRRINNG
RRRING
LORD, PLEASE GRANT YOUR SLEEP-DEPRIVED SERVANT SOME REST...

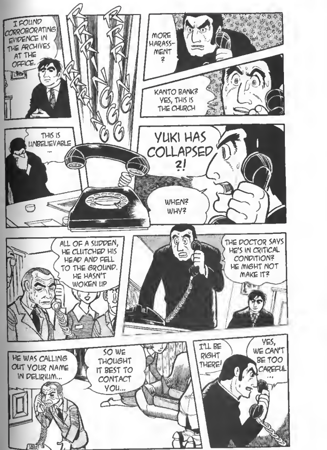

GOOD MORNING, FATHER!
YOU DON'T LOOK WELL.
I DIDN'T SLEEP A WINK ALL NIGHT.
INSOMNIA?
NO...THE PHONE WOULDN'T STOP RINGING.
WHY?
HARASSMENT.
EVER SINCE WE SPOKE...
IS IT BAD?
YES. THERE ARE ABOUT 30 OF THEM TAKING TURNS, I'D SAY.
THAT'S AWFUL.
HOW VILE!

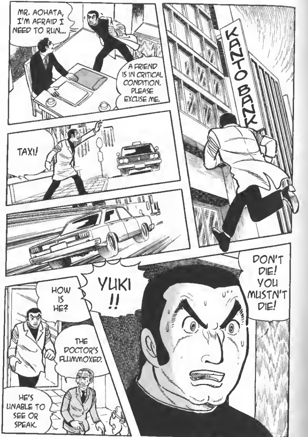

THE UNNERVING PART IS THAT THEY SEEM TO KNOW MY SCHEDULE.
HMM... PERHAPS YOUR PHONE'S BUGGED?
BUGGED?
YOU SHOULDN'T USE THIS ONE ANYMORE. CAN YOU GET A NEW ONE?
BUGGED, EH?
I WONDER WHO DID IT AND WHEN?
AFTER WE SPOKE, I WENT OUT TO THAT ISLAND
JUST AS YOU SAID, FATHER, THE RECORDS AT THE TOWN HALL SHOWED THAT ALL 800 CURRENT RESIDENTS SETTLED ON THE ISLAND 16 YEARS AGO.
I ASKED AROUND, AND NONE OF THEM KNOWS ANYTHING ABOUT THE ISLAND BEFORE THAT TIME.


THERE WAS A FOREIGN MILITARY BASE ON THE ISLAND, BUT IT WAS REMOVED 16 YEARS AGO. NOW EVEN THE LOCATION IS UNKNOWN.
IN OTHER WORDS, THE ISLAND WAS COMPLETELY REBORN. NOBODY KNOWS ANYTHING PRIOR TO THAT TIME, ANY MORE THAN THEY KNOW ABOUT THEIR PAST INCARNATIONS!
I WANDERED ALL OVER, TRYING TO FIND EVEN THE TINIEST SCRAP OF EVIDENCE.
WHILE I WAS THERE, SOMETHING HAPPENED ON THE ISLAND THAT CAUSED QUITE A STIR...
A MURDER VICTIM WAS DISCOVERED ON A HILL ON THE ISLAND'S SOUTHERN COAST. HE'D BEEN SHOT.


THE ISLAND WAS ABUZZ LIKE A BEEHIVE!
I TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE COMMOTION TO DO SOME MORE INVESTIGATING
AND I FINALLY FOUND SOMETHING: TWO SEAMEN WHO REMEMBERED THE CLOSURE OF THE BASE WHERE THE MW WAS STORED, 16 YEARS AGO.
SURE ENOUGH, THE MW WAS MOVED FROM THE ISLAND. AND WHERE DO YOU SUPPOSE IT WAS MOVED?

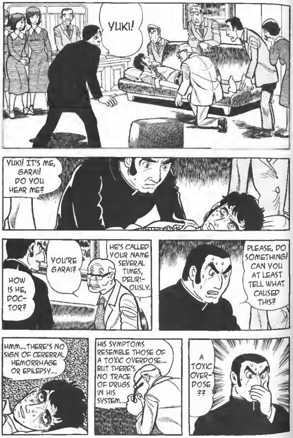

TO THE MAINLAND
TO A NATION X BASE NEAR TOKYO.
YOU MUST BE KIDDING!
I TOOK GREAT PAINS TO CONFIRM THEIR STORY.
MW WAS BROUGHT TO THE MAINLAND?
THAT CAN'T BE TRUE. CAN IT?
CAN IT?
IT MUST BE A MISTAKE!
UNFORTUNATELY, I'M AFRAID IT'S TRUE.
MW... HERE ON THE MAINLAND!!
AND NEAR TOKYO, NO LESS!
HOW CAN THAT BE?

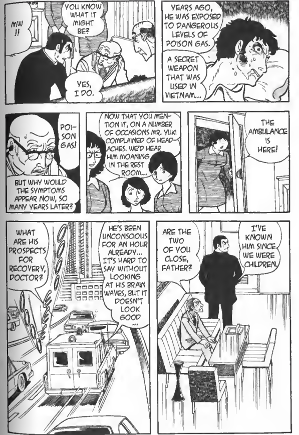

I FOUND CORROBORATING EVIDENCE IN THE ARCHIVES AT THE OFFICE.
RRRRRINGGG
RRRRRINGGG
MORE HARASSMENT?
KANTO BANK? YES, THIS IS THE CHURCH
THIS IS UNBELIEVABLE...
YUKI HAS COLLAPSED?!
WHEN? WHY?
ALL OF A SUDDEN, HE CLUTCHED HIS HEAD AND FELL TO THE GROUND. HE HASN'T WOKEN UP
THE DOCTOR SAYS HE'S IN CRITICAL CONDITION? HE MIGHT NOT MAKE IT?
HE WAS CALLING OUT YOUR NAME IN DELIRIUM...
SO WE THOUGHT IT BEST TO CONTACT YOU...
I'LL BE RIGHT THERE!
YES, WE CAN'T BE TOO CAREFUL...

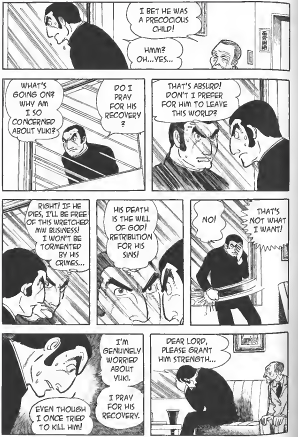

MR. AOHATA, I'M AFRAID I NEED TO RUN...
A FRIEND IS IN CRITICAL CONDITION. PLEASE EXCUSE ME.
KANTO BANK
TAXI!
HOW IS HE?
THE DOCTOR'S FLUMMOXED.
HE'S UNABLE TO SEE OR SPEAK.
YUKI!!
DON'T DIE! YOU MUSTN'T DIE!

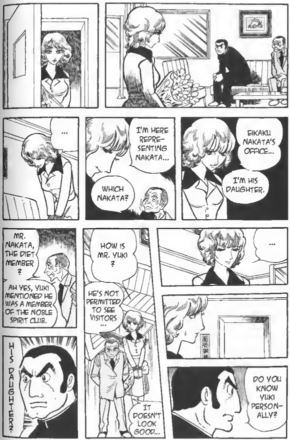
CHAPTER SIXTEEN

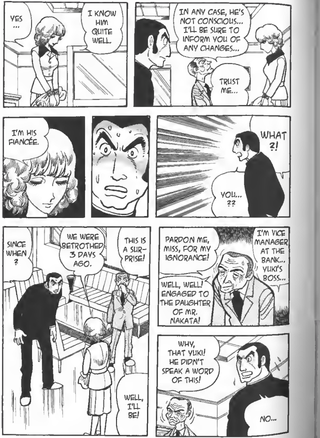
CHANCE ENCOUNTER

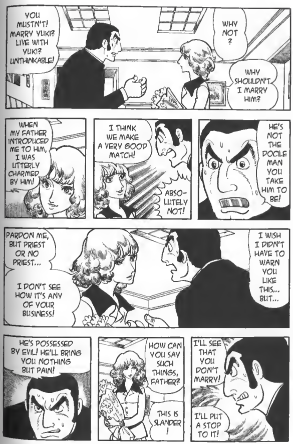

YUKI!
YUKI! IT'S ME, GARAI! DO YOU HEAR ME?
HOW IS HE, DOCTOR?
YOU'RE GARAI?
HE'S CALLED YOUR NAME SEVERAL TIMES, DELIRIOUSLY.
PLEASE, DO SOMETHING! CAN YOU AT LEAST TELL WHAT CAUSED THIS?
HMM...THERE'S NO SIGN OF CEREBRAL HEMORRHAGE OR EPILEPSY...
HIS SYMPTOMS RESEMBLE THOSE OF A TOXIC OVERDOSE... BUT THERE'S NO TRACE OF DRUGS IN HIS SYSTEM...
A TOXIC OVERDOSE??

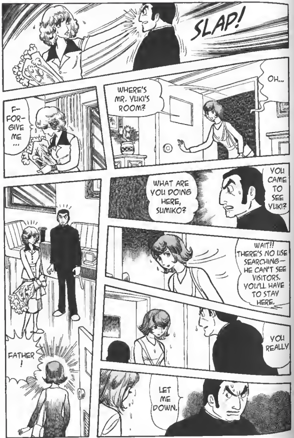

MW!!
YOU KNOW WHAT IT MIGHT BE?
YES, I DO.
YEARS AGO, HE WAS EXPOSED TO DANGEROUS LEVELS OF POISON GAS.
A SECRET WEAPON THAT WAS USED IN VIETNAM...
POISON GAS!
BUT WHY WOULD THE SYMPTOMS APPEAR NOW, SO MANY YEARS LATER?
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS MR. YUKI COMPLAINED OF HEADACHES. WE'D HEAR HIM MOANING IN THE REST ROOM...
THE AMBULANCE IS HERE!
WHAT ARE HIS PROSPECTS FOR RECOVERY, DOCTOR?
HE'S BEEN UNCONSCIOUS FOR AN HOUR ALREADY... IT'S HARD TO SAY WITHOUT LOOKING AT HIS BRAIN WAVES, BUT IT DOESN'T LOOK GOOD ...
ARE THE TWO OF YOU CLOSE, FATHER?
I'VE KNOWN HIM SINCE WE WERE CHILDREN.

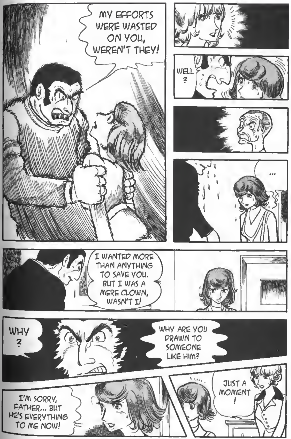

I BET HE WAS A PRECOCIOUS CHILD!
HMM? OH...YES...
WHAT'S GOING ON? WHY AM I SO CONCERNED ABOUT YUKI?
DO I PRAY FOR HIS RECOVERY?
THAT'S ABSURD! DON'T I PREFER FOR HIM TO LEAVE THIS WORLD?
RIGHT! IF HE DIES, I'LL BE FREE OF THIS WRETCHED MW BUSINESS! I WON'T BE TORMENTED BY HIS CRIMES...
HIS DEATH IS THE WILL OF GOD! RETRIBUTION FOR HIS SINS!
NO!
THAT'S NOT WHAT I WANT!
I'M GENUINELY WORRIED ABOUT YUKI.
EVEN THOUGH I ONCE TRIED TO KILL HIM!
I PRAY FOR HIS RECOVERY.
DEAR LORD, PLEASE GRANT HIM STRENGTH...

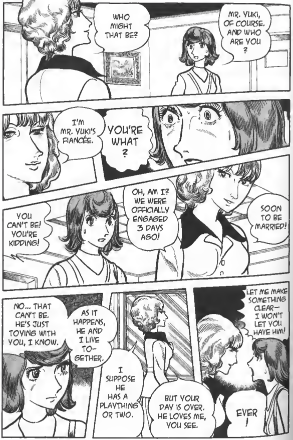

...
I'M HERE REPRESENTING NAKATA...
WHICH NAKATA?
EIKAKU NAKATA'S OFFICE...
I'M HIS DAUGHTER.
MR. NAKATA, THE DIET MEMBER?
AH YES, YUKI MENTIONED HE WAS A MEMBER OF THE NOBLE SPIRIT CLUB.
HIS DAUGHTER?
HOW IS MR. YUKI?
HE'S NOT PERMITTED TO SEE VISITORS...
IT DOESN'T LOOK GOOD...
...
DO YOU KNOW YUKI PERSONALLY?

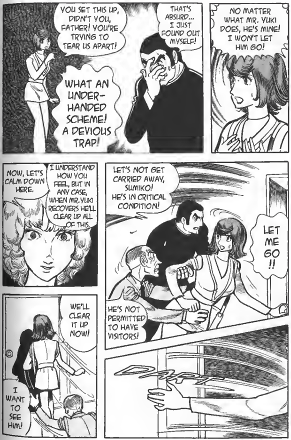

YES ...
I KNOW HIM QUITE WELL.
IN ANY CASE, HE'S NOT CONSCIOUS... I'LL BE SURE TO INFORM YOU OF ANY CHANGES...
TRUST ME...
I'M HIS FIANCÉE.
WHAT ?!
YOU... ??
SINCE WHEN ?
WE WERE BETROTHED 3 DAYS AGO.
THIS IS A SURPRISE!
WELL, I'LL BE!
PARDON ME, MISS, FOR MY IGNORANCE!
I'M VICE MANAGER AT THE BANK... YUKI'S BOSS...
WELL, WELL! ENGAGED TO THE DAUGHTER OF MR. NAKATA!
WHY, THAT YUKI! HE DIDN'T SPEAK A WORD OF THIS!
NO...

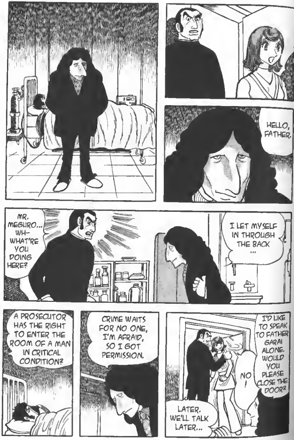

YOU MUSTN'T! MARRY YUKI? LIVE WITH YUKI? UNTHINKABLE!
WHY NOT ?
WHY SHOULDN'T I MARRY HIM?
WHEN MY FATHER INTRODUCED ME TO HIM, I WAS UTTERLY CHARMED BY HIM!
I THINK WE MAKE A VERY GOOD MATCH!
ABSOLUTELY NOT!
HE'S NOT THE DOCILE MAN YOU TAKE HIM TO BE!
PARDON ME, BUT PRIEST OR NO PRIEST...
I DON'T SEE HOW IT'S ANY OF YOUR BUSINESS!
I WISH I DIDN'T HAVE TO WARN YOU LIKE THIS... BUT...
HE'S POSSESSED BY EVIL! HE'LL BRING YOU NOTHING BUT PAIN!
HOW CAN YOU SAY SUCH THINGS, FATHER?
THIS IS SLANDER !
I'LL SEE THAT YOU DON'T MARRY!
I'LL PUT A STOP TO IT!

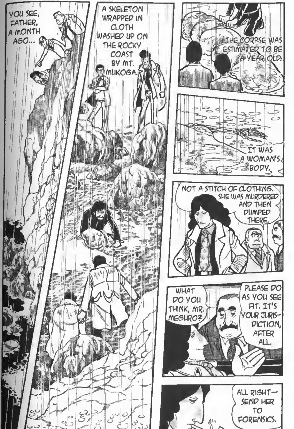

SLAP!
F-FORGIVE ME...
WHERE'S MR. YUKI'S ROOM?
OH...
FATHER!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, SUMIKO?
YOU CAME TO SEE YUKI!?
WAIT!! THERE'S NO USE SEARCHING—HE CAN'T SEE VISITORS. YOU'LL HAVE TO STAY HERE.
YOU REALLY
LET ME DOWN.

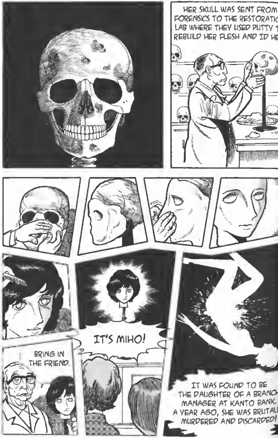

MY EFFORTS WERE WASTED ON YOU, WEREN'T THEY!
WELL?
...
I WANTED MORE THAN ANYTHING TO SAVE YOU. BUT I WAS A MERE CLOWN, WASN'T I!
WHY?
WHY ARE YOU DRAWN TO SOMEONE LIKE HIM?
I'M SORRY, FATHER... BUT HE'S EVERYTHING TO ME NOW!
JUST A MOMENT!

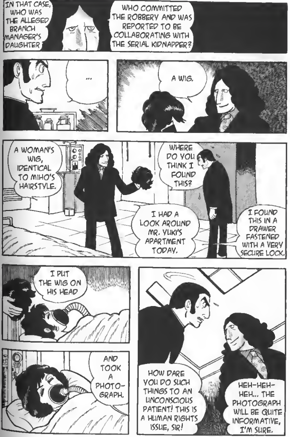

WHO MIGHT THAT BE?
MR. YUKI, OF COURSE. AND WHO ARE YOU?
I'M MR. YUKI'S FIANCÉE.
YOU'RE WHAT?
YOU CAN'T BE! YOU'RE KIDDING!
OH, AM I? WE WERE OFFICIALLY ENGAGED 3 DAYS AGO!
SOON TO BE MARRIED!
NO... THAT CAN'T BE. HE'S JUST TOYING WITH YOU, I KNOW.
AS IT HAPPENS, HE AND I LIVE TOGETHER.
I SUPPOSE HE HAS A PLAYTHING OR TWO.
BUT YOUR DAY IS OVER. HE LOVES ME, YOU SEE.
LET ME MAKE SOMETHING CLEAR— I WON'T LET YOU HAVE HIM!
EVER!

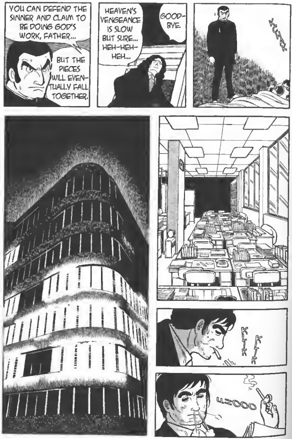

YOU SET THIS UP, DIDN'T YOU, FATHER! YOU'RE TRYING TO TEAR US APART!
WHAT AN UNDERHANDED SCHEME! A DEVIOUS TRAP!
THAT'S ABSURD... I JUST FOUND OUT MYSELF!
NO MATTER WHAT MR. YUKI DOES, HE'S MINE! I WON'T LET HIM GO!
NOW, LET'S CALM DOWN HERE.
I UNDERSTAND HOW YOU FEEL, BUT IN ANY CASE, WHEN MR. YUKI RECOVERS HE'LL CLEAR UP ALL OF THIS.
LET'S NOT GET CARRIED AWAY, SUMIKO! HE'S IN CRITICAL CONDITION!
LET ME GO!!
HE'S NOT PERMITTED TO HAVE VISITORS!
WE'LL CLEAR IT UP NOW!
I WANT TO SEE HIM!
DART

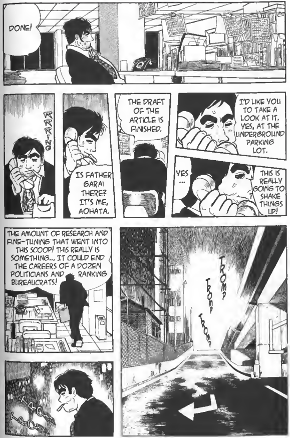

HELLO, FATHER.
MR. MEGURO... WH-WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?
I LET MYSELF IN THROUGH THE BACK ...
A PROSECUTOR HAS THE RIGHT TO ENTER THE ROOM OF A MAN IN CRITICAL CONDITION?
CRIME WAITS FOR NO ONE, I'M AFRAID, SO I GOT PERMISSION.
I'D LIKE TO SPEAK TO FATHER GARAI ALONE. WOULD YOU PLEASE CLOSE THE DOOR?
NO!
LATER. WE'LL TALK LATER...

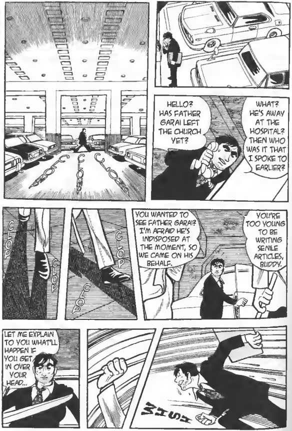

YOU SEE, FATHER, A MONTH AGO...
A SKELETON WRAPPED IN CLOTH WASHED UP ON THE ROCKY COAST BY MT. MUKOGA.
THE CORPSE WAS ESTIMATED TO BE A YEAR OLD.
IT WAS A WOMAN'S BODY.
NOT A STITCH OF CLOTHING. SHE WAS MURDERED AND THEN DUMPED THERE.
WHAT DO YOU THINK, MR. MEGURO?
PLEASE DO AS YOU SEE FIT. IT'S YOUR JURISDICTION, AFTER ALL.
ALL RIGHT—SEND HER TO FORENSICS.

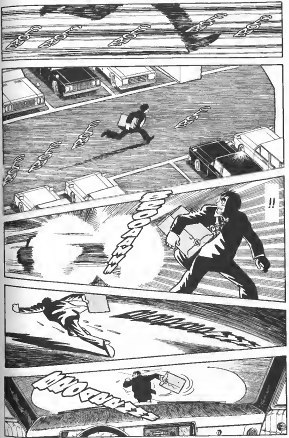

HER SKULL WAS SENT FROM FORENSICS TO THE RESTORATION LAB WHERE THEY USED PUTTY TO REBUILD HER FLESH AND ID HER.
IT'S MIHO!
BRING IN THE FRIEND.
IT WAS FOUND TO BE THE DAUGHTER OF A BRANCH MANAGER AT KANTO BANK. A YEAR AGO, SHE WAS BRUTALLY MURDERED AND DISCARDED!

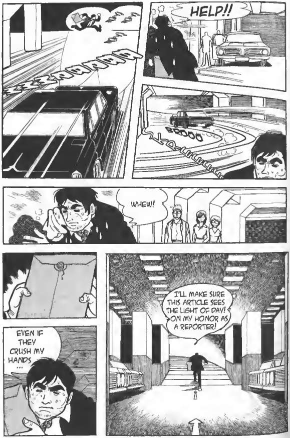

IN THAT CASE, WHO WAS THE ALLEGED BRANCH MANAGER'S DAUGHTER
WHO COMMITTED THE ROBBERY AND WAS REPORTED TO BE COLLABORATING WITH THE SERIAL KIDNAPPER?
...
A WIG.
A WOMAN'S WIG, IDENTICAL TO MIHO'S HAIRSTYLE.
WHERE DO YOU THINK I FOUND THIS?
I HAD A LOOK AROUND MR. YUKI'S APARTMENT TODAY.
I FOUND THIS IN A DRAWER FASTENED WITH A VERY SECURE LOCK.
I PUT THE WIG ON HIS HEAD
AND TOOK A PHOTOGRAPH.
HOW DARE YOU DO SUCH THINGS TO AN UNCONSCIOUS PATIENT! THIS IS A HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE, SIR!
HEH-HEH-HEH... THE PHOTOGRAPH WILL BE QUITE INFORMATIVE, I'M SURE.


YOU CAN DEFEND THE SINNER AND CLAIM TO BE DOING GOD'S WORK, FATHER...
BUT THE PIECES WILL EVENTUALLY FALL TOGETHER.
HEAVEN'S VENGEANCE IS SLOW BUT SURE... HEH-HEH-HEH...
GOOD-BYE.
KCHAK
KLIK KLIK
WHOOO


DONE!
RRRING
IS FATHER GARAI THERE? IT'S ME, AOHATA.
THE DRAFT OF THE ARTICLE IS FINISHED.
I'D LIKE YOU TO TAKE A LOOK AT IT. YES, AT THE UNDERGROUND PARKING LOT.
YES...
THIS IS REALLY GOING TO SHAKE THINGS UP!
THE AMOUNT OF RESEARCH AND FINE-TUNING THAT WENT INTO THIS SCOOP! THIS REALLY IS SOMETHING... IT COULD END THE CAREERS OF A DOZEN POLITICIANS AND RANKING BUREAUCRATS!
TROMP TROMP
TROMP TROMP TROMP

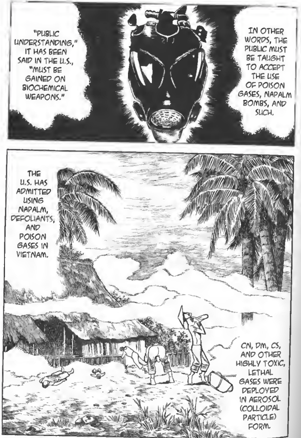

CLOP
CLOP
CLOP
HELLO? HAS FATHER GARAI LEFT THE CHURCH YET?
WHAT? HE'S AWAY AT THE HOSPITAL? THEN WHO WAS IT THAT I SPOKE TO EARLIER?
CLOP
CLOP
CLOP
CLOP
YOU WANTED TO SEE FATHER GARAI? I'M AFRAID HE'S INDISPOSED AT THE MOMENT, SO WE CAME ON HIS BEHALF.
YOU'RE TOO YOUNG TO BE WRITING SENILE ARTICLES, BUDDY.
LET ME EXPLAIN TO YOU WHAT'LL HAPPEN IF YOU GET IN OVER YOUR HEAD...

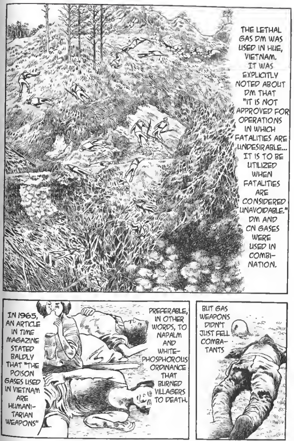

CLOP
CLOP
CLOP
CLOP
CLOP
CLOP
CLOP
CLOP
CLOP
CLOP
!!

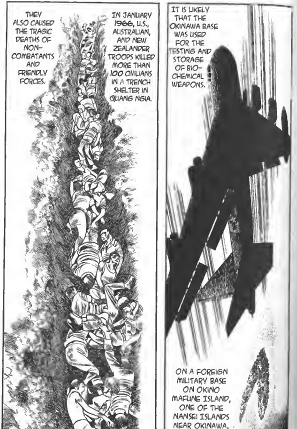

HELP!!
BROOO
WHEW!
I'LL MAKE SURE THIS ARTICLE SEES THE LIGHT OF DAY! ON MY HONOR AS A REPORTER!
EVEN IF THEY CRUSH MY HANDS ...

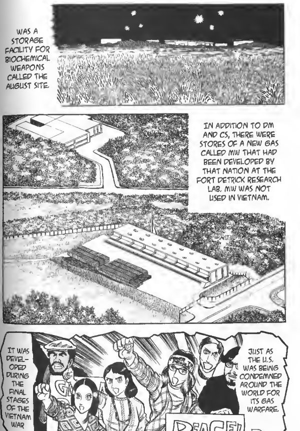
CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

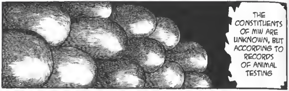
TARGET

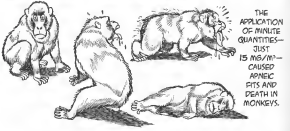

"PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING," IT HAS BEEN SAID IN THE U.S., "MUST BE GAINED ON BIOCHEMICAL WEAPONS."
IN OTHER WORDS, THE PUBLIC MUST BE TAUGHT TO ACCEPT THE USE OF POISON GASES, NAPALM BOMBS, AND SUCH.
THE U.S. HAS ADMITTED USING NAPALM, DEFOLIANTS, AND POISON GASES IN VIETNAM.
CN, DM, CS, AND OTHER HIGHLY TOXIC, LETHAL GASES WERE DEPLOYED IN AEROSOL (COLLOIDAL PARTICLE) FORM.

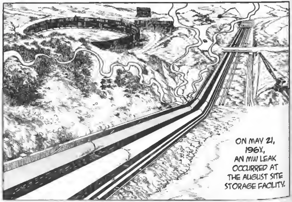

THE LETHAL GAS DM WAS USED IN HUE, VIETNAM. IT WAS EXPLICITLY NOTED ABOUT DM THAT "IT IS NOT APPROVED FOR OPERATIONS IN WHICH FATALITIES ARE UNDESIRABLE... IT IS TO BE UTILIZED WHEN FATALITIES ARE CONSIDERED UNAVOIDABLE." DM AND CN GASES WERE USED IN COMBINATION.
IN 1965, AN ARTICLE IN TIME MAGAZINE STATED BALDLY THAT "THE POISON GASES USED IN VIETNAM ARE HUMANITARIAN WEAPONS"
PREFERABLE, IN OTHER WORDS, TO NAPALM AND WHITE-PHOSPHOROUS ORDINANCE THAT BURNED VILLAGERS TO DEATH.
BUT GAS WEAPONS DIDN'T JUST FELL COMBATANTS

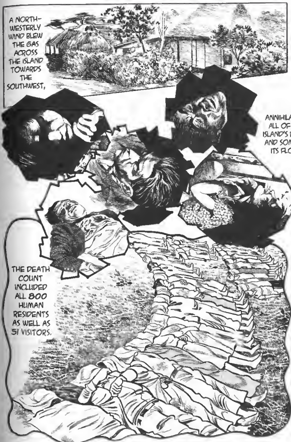

THEY ALSO CAUSED THE TRAGIC DEATHS OF NON-COMBATANTS AND FRIENDLY FORCES.
IN JANUARY 1966, U.S., AUSTRALIAN, AND NEW ZEALANDER TROOPS KILLED MORE THAN 100 CIVILIANS IN A TRENCH SHELTER IN QUANG NGIA.
IT IS LIKELY THAT THE OKINAWA BASE WAS USED FOR THE TESTING AND STORAGE OF BIO-CHEMICAL WEAPONS.
ON A FOREIGN MILITARY BASE ON OKINO MAFUNE ISLAND, ONE OF THE NANSEI ISLANDS NEAR OKINAWA,

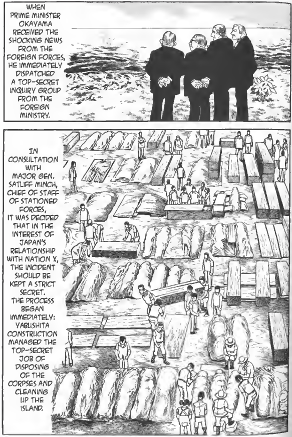

WAS A STORAGE FACILITY FOR BIOCHEMICAL WEAPONS CALLED THE AUGUST SITE.
IN ADDITION TO DM AND CS, THERE WERE STORES OF A NEW GAS CALLED MW THAT HAD BEEN DEVELOPED BY THAT NATION AT THE FORT DETRICK RESEARCH LAB. MW WAS NOT USED IN VIETNAM.
IT WAS DEVEL-OPED DURING THE FINAL STAGES OF THE VIETNAM WAR
JUST AS THE U.S. WAS BEING CONDEMNED AROUND THE WORLD FOR ITS GAS WARFARE.
PEACE!

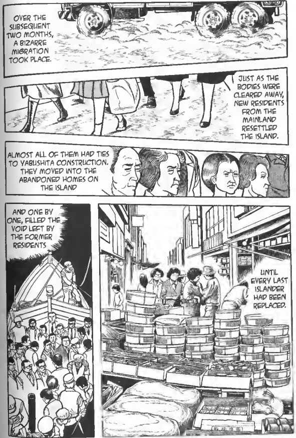

THE CONSTITUENTS OF MW ARE UNKNOWN, BUT ACCORDING TO RECORDS OF ANIMAL TESTING

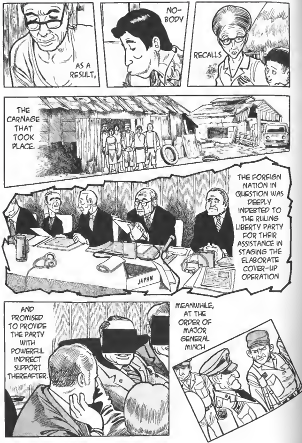

THE APPLICATION OF MINUTE QUANTITIES—JUST 15 MG/M^3—CAUSED APNEIC FITS AND DEATH IN MONKEYS.

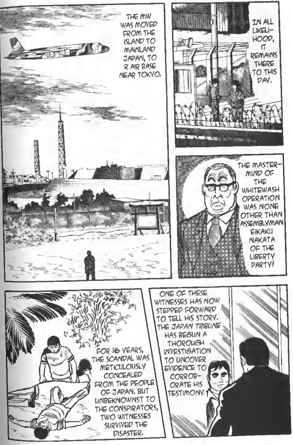

ON MAY 21, 196X, AN MW LEAK OCCURRED AT THE AUGUST SITE STORAGE FACILITY.

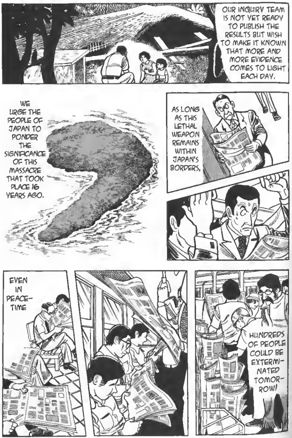

A NORTH-WESTERLY WIND BLEW THE GAS ACROSS THE ISLAND TOWARDS THE SOUTHWEST,
ANNIHILATING ALL OF THE ISLAND'S FAUNA AND SOME OF ITS FLORA.
THE DEATH COUNT INCLUDED ALL 800 HUMAN RESIDENTS AS WELL AS 51 VISITORS.

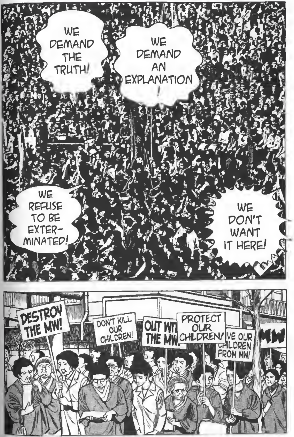

WHEN PRIME MINISTER OKAYAMA RECEIVED THE SHOCKING NEWS FROM THE FOREIGN FORCES, HE IMMEDIATELY DISPATCHED A TOP-SECRET INQUIRY GROUP FROM THE FOREIGN MINISTRY.
IN CONSULTATION WITH MAJOR GEN. SATLIFF MINCH, CHIEF OF STAFF OF STATIONED FORCES, IT WAS DECIDED THAT IN THE INTEREST OF JAPAN'S RELATIONSHIP WITH NATION X, THE INCIDENT SHOULD BE KEPT A STRICT SECRET. THE PROCESS BEGAN IMMEDIATELY: YABUSHITA CONSTRUCTION MANAGED THE TOP-SECRET JOB OF DISPOSING OF THE CORPSES AND CLEANING UP THE ISLAND.

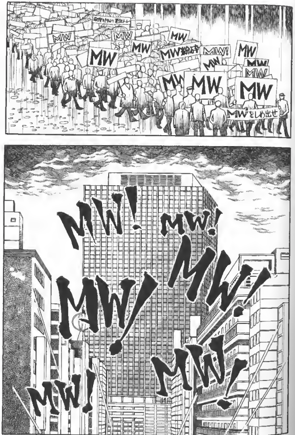

OVER THE SUBSEQUENT TWO MONTHS, A BIZARRE MIGRATION TOOK PLACE.
JUST AS THE BODIES WERE CLEARED AWAY, NEW RESIDENTS FROM THE MAINLAND RESETTLED THE ISLAND.
ALMOST ALL OF THEM HAD TIES TO YABUSHITA CONSTRUCTION. THEY MOVED INTO THE ABANDONED HOMES ON THE ISLAND
AND ONE BY ONE, FILLED THE VOID LEFT BY THE FORMER RESIDENTS
UNTIL EVERY LAST ISLANDER HAD BEEN REPLACED.


AS A RESULT,
NOBODY
RECALLS
THE CARNAGE THAT TOOK PLACE.
THE FOREIGN NATION IN QUESTION WAS DEEPLY INDEBTED TO THE RULING LIBERTY PARTY FOR THEIR ASSISTANCE IN STAGING THE ELABORATE COVER-UP OPERATION
JAPAN
AND PROMISED TO PROVIDE THE PARTY WITH POWERFUL INDIRECT SUPPORT THEREAFTER.
MEANWHILE, AT THE ORDER OF MAJOR GENERAL MINCH


THE MW WAS MOVED FROM THE ISLAND TO MAINLAND JAPAN, TO R AIR BASE NEAR TOKYO.
IN ALL LIKELIHOOD, IT REMAINS THERE TO THIS DAY.
THE MASTERMIND OF THE WHITEWASH OPERATION WAS NONE OTHER THAN ASSEMBLYMAN EIKAKU NAKATA OF THE LIBERTY PARTY!
FOR 16 YEARS, THE SCANDAL WAS METICULOUSLY CONCEALED FROM THE PEOPLE OF JAPAN, BUT UNBEKNOWNST TO THE CONSPIRATORS, TWO WITNESSES SURVIVED THE DISASTER.
ONE OF THESE WITNESSES HAS NOW STEPPED FORWARD TO TELL HIS STORY. THE *JAPAN TRIBUNE* HAS BEGUN A THOROUGH INVESTIGATION TO UNCOVER EVIDENCE TO CORROBORATE HIS TESTIMONY.


OUR INQUIRY TEAM IS NOT YET READY TO PUBLISH THE RESULTS BUT WISH TO MAKE IT KNOWN THAT MORE AND MORE EVIDENCE COMES TO LIGHT EACH DAY.
WE URGE THE PEOPLE OF JAPAN TO PONDER THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS MASSACRE THAT TOOK PLACE 16 YEARS AGO.
AS LONG AS THIS LETHAL WEAPON REMAINS WITHIN JAPAN'S BORDERS,
EVEN IN PEACE-TIME
HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE COULD BE EXTERMINATED TOMORROW!


WE DEMAND THE TRUTH!
WE DEMAND AN EXPLANATION!
WE REFUSE TO BE EXTERMINATED!
WE DON'T WANT IT HERE!
DESTROY THE MW!
DON'T KILL OUR CHILDREN!
OUT WIT THE MW
PROTECT OUR CHILDREN!
VE OUR CHILDREN FROM MW!
MW


MW
MW
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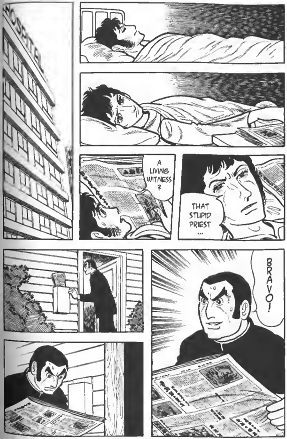
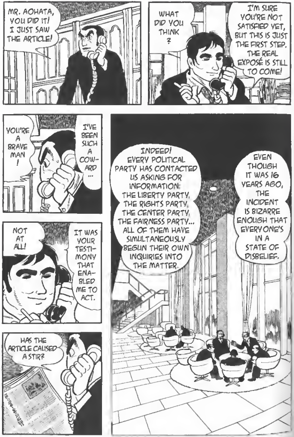
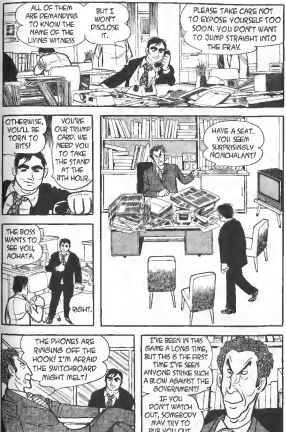
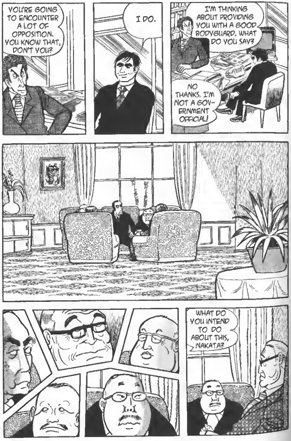
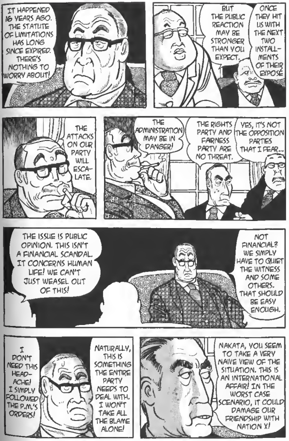
MWをしめ出せ
MW!
MW!
MW!
MW!
MW!
MW!

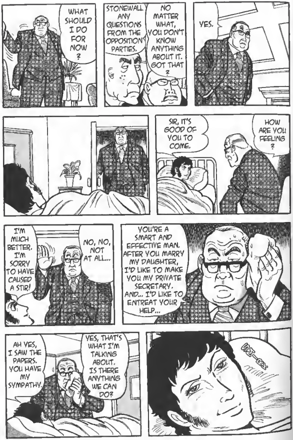

HOSPITAL
A LIVING WITNESS?
THAT STUPID PRIEST ...
BRAVO!


MR. AOHATA, YOU DID IT! I JUST SAW THE ARTICLE!
WHAT DID YOU THINK?
I'M SURE YOU'RE NOT SATISFIED YET, BUT THIS IS JUST THE FIRST STEP. THE REAL EXPOSÉ IS STILL TO COME!
YOU'RE A BRAVE MAN!
I'VE BEEN SUCH A COWARD...
NOT AT ALL!
IT WAS YOUR TESTIMONY THAT ENABLED ME TO ACT.
HAS THE ARTICLE CAUSED A STIR?
INDEED! EVERY POLITICAL PARTY HAS CONTACTED US ASKING FOR INFORMATION: THE LIBERTY PARTY, THE RIGHTS PARTY, THE CENTER PARTY, THE FAIRNESS PARTY... ALL OF THEM HAVE SIMULTANEOUSLY BEGUN THEIR OWN INQUIRIES INTO THE MATTER.
EVEN THOUGH IT WAS 16 YEARS AGO, THE INCIDENT IS BIZARRE ENOUGH THAT EVERYONE'S IN A STATE OF DISBELIEF.


ALL OF THEM ARE DEMANDING TO KNOW THE NAME OF THE LIVING WITNESS
BUT I WON'T DISCLOSE IT.
PLEASE TAKE CARE NOT TO EXPOSE YOURSELF TOO SOON. YOU DON'T WANT TO JUMP STRAIGHT INTO THE FRAY.
OTHERWISE, YOU'LL BE TORN TO BITS!
YOU'RE OUR TRUMP CARD. WE NEED YOU TO TAKE THE STAND AT THE 11TH HOUR.
THE BOSS WANTS TO SEE YOU, AOHATA.
RIGHT.
HAVE A SEAT. YOU SEEM SURPRISINGLY NONCHALANT!
THE PHONES ARE RINGING OFF THE HOOK! I'M AFRAID THE SWITCHBOARD MIGHT MELT!
I'VE BEEN IN THIS GAME A LONG TIME, BUT THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE SEEN ANYONE STRIKE SUCH A BLOW AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT!
IF YOU DON'T WATCH OUT, SOMEBODY MAY TRY TO RUB YOU OUT.

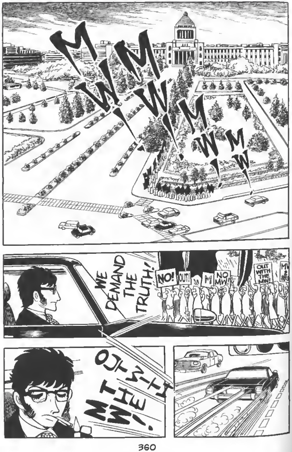

YOU'RE GOING TO ENCOUNTER A LOT OF OPPOSITION. YOU KNOW THAT, DON'T YOU?
I DO.
I'M THINKING ABOUT PROVIDING YOU WITH A GOOD BODYGUARD. WHAT DO YOU SAY?
NO THANKS. I'M NOT A GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL!
WHAT DO YOU INTEND TO DO ABOUT THIS, NAKATA?

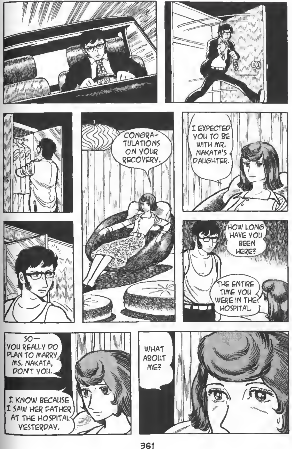

IT HAPPENED 16 YEARS AGO. THE STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS HAS LONG SINCE EXPIRED. THERE'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT!
BUT THE PUBLIC REACTION MAY BE STRONGER THAN YOU EXPECT.
ONCE THEY HIT US WITH THE NEXT TWO INSTALLMENTS OF THEIR EXPOSE
THE ATTACKS ON OUR PARTY WILL ESCALATE.
THE ADMINISTRATION MAY BE IN DANGER!
THE RIGHTS PARTY AND FAIRNESS PARTY ARE NO THREAT.
YES, IT'S NOT THE OPPOSITION PARTIES THAT I FEAR...
THE ISSUE IS PUBLIC OPINION. THIS ISN'T A FINANCIAL SCANDAL. IT CONCERNS HUMAN LIFE! WE CAN'T JUST WEASEL OUT OF THIS!
NOT FINANCIAL? WE SIMPLY HAVE TO QUIET THE WITNESS AND SOME OTHERS. THAT SHOULD BE EASY ENOUGH.
I DON'T NEED THIS HEADACHE! I SIMPLY FOLLOWED THE P.M.'S ORDERS!
NATURALLY, THIS IS SOMETHING THE ENTIRE PARTY NEEDS TO DEAL WITH. I WON'T TAKE ALL THE BLAME ALONE!
NAKATA, YOU SEEM TO TAKE A VERY NAIVE VIEW OF THE SITUATION. THIS IS AN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIR! IN THE WORST CASE SCENARIO, IT COULD DAMAGE OUR FRIENDSHIP WITH NATION X!

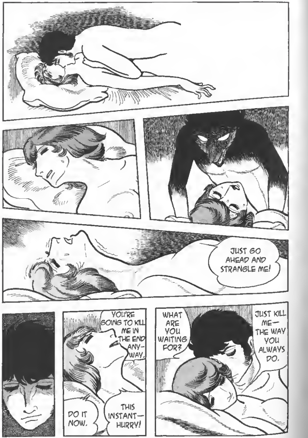

WHAT SHOULD I DO FOR NOW?
STONEWALL ANY QUESTIONS FROM THE OPPOSITION PARTIES.
NO MATTER WHAT, YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT. GOT THAT?
YES.
SIR, IT'S GOOD OF YOU TO COME.
HOW ARE YOU FEELING?
I'M MUCH BETTER. I'M SORRY TO HAVE CAUSED A STIR!
NO, NO, NOT AT ALL...
YOU'RE A SMART AND EFFECTIVE MAN. AFTER YOU MARRY MY DAUGHTER, I'D LIKE TO MAKE YOU MY PRIVATE SECRETARY. AND... I'D LIKE TO ENTREAT YOUR HELP...
AH YES, I SAW THE PAPERS. YOU HAVE MY SYMPATHY.
YES, THAT'S WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT. IS THERE ANYTHING WE CAN DO?

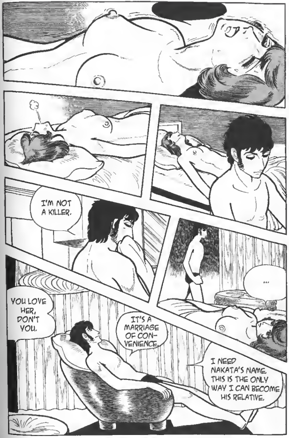
CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

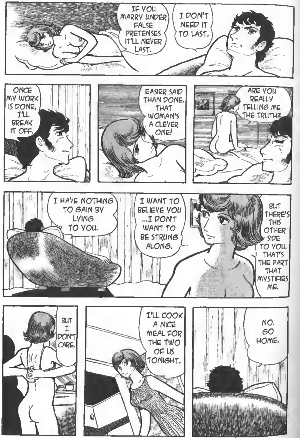
CONTAINMENT

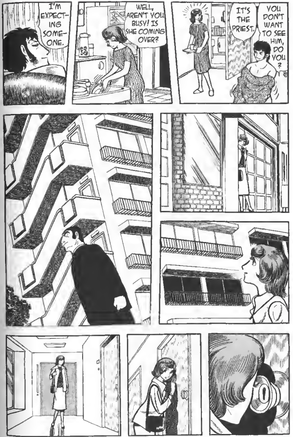

MW! MW! MW! MW!
WE DEMAND THE TRUTH!
NO!
OUT!
M
NO MW!
OUT WITH THE MW!
OUT WITH THE MW!

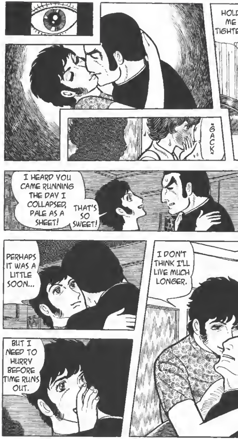

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR RECOVERY.
I EXPECTED YOU TO BE WITH MR. NAKATA'S DAUGHTER.
HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN HERE?
THE ENTIRE TIME YOU WERE IN THE HOSPITAL.
SO— YOU REALLY DO PLAN TO MARRY MS. NAKATA, DON'T YOU.
I KNOW BECAUSE I SAW HER FATHER AT THE HOSPITAL YESTERDAY.
WHAT ABOUT ME?

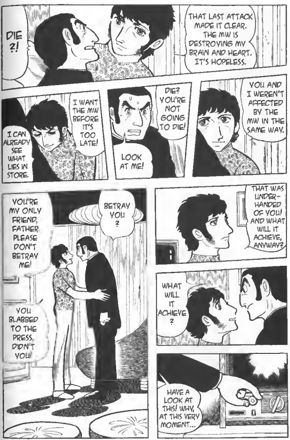

JUST GO AHEAD AND STRANGLE ME!
YOU'RE GOING TO KILL ME IN THE END ANYWAY.
DO IT NOW.
THIS INSTANT—HURRY!
WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?
JUST KILL ME—THE WAY YOU ALWAYS DO.

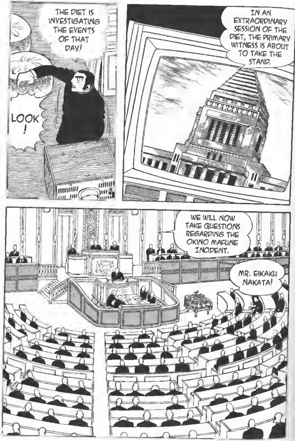

I'M NOT A KILLER.
...
YOU LOVE HER, DON'T YOU.
IT'S A MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE.
I NEED NAKATA'S NAME. THIS IS THE ONLY WAY I CAN BECOME HIS RELATIVE.

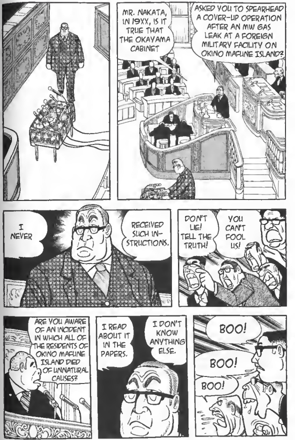

IF YOU MARRY UNDER FALSE PRETENSES IT'LL NEVER LAST.
I DON'T NEED IT TO LAST.
ONCE MY WORK IS DONE, I'LL BREAK IT OFF.
EASIER SAID THAN DONE. THAT WOMAN'S A CLEVER ONE!
ARE YOU REALLY TELLING ME THE TRUTH?
I HAVE NOTHING TO GAIN BY LYING TO YOU.
I WANT TO BELIEVE YOU ...I DON'T WANT TO BE STRUNG ALONG.
BUT THERE'S THIS OTHER SIDE TO YOU. THAT'S THE PART THAT MYSTIFIES ME.
BUT I DON'T CARE.
I'LL COOK A NICE MEAL FOR THE TWO OF US TONIGHT.
NO. GO HOME.

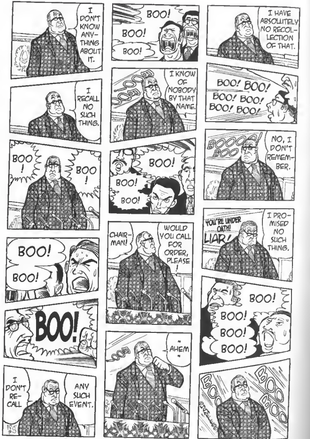

I'M EXPECTING SOMEONE.
WELL, AREN'T YOU BUSY! IS SHE COMING OVER?
IT'S THE PRIEST.
YOU DON'T WANT TO SEE HIM, DO YOU?

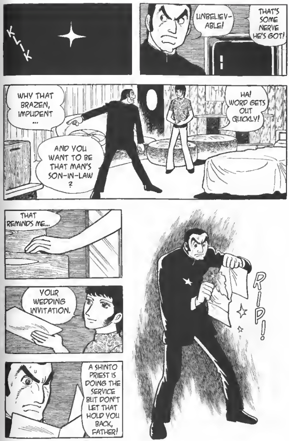

HOLD ME TIGHTER!
GACK
I HEARD YOU CAME RUNNING THE DAY I COLLAPSED, PALE AS A SHEET!
THAT'S SO SWEET!
SHOULDN'T YOU STILL BE IN THE HOSPITAL?
PERHAPS IT WAS A LITTLE SOON...
BUT I NEED TO HURRY BEFORE TIME RUNS OUT.
I DON'T THINK I'LL LIVE MUCH LONGER.
I WANT TO GET HOLD OF THE MW BEFORE I DIE!

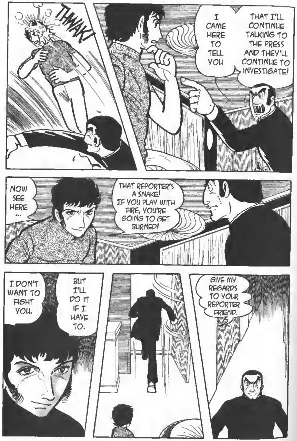

DIE ?!
THAT LAST ATTACK MADE IT CLEAR. THE MW IS DESTROYING MY BRAIN AND HEART. IT'S HOPELESS.
I WANT THE MW BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!
I CAN ALREADY SEE WHAT LIES IN STORE.
DIE? YOU'RE NOT GOING TO DIE!
LOOK AT ME!
YOU AND I WEREN'T AFFECTED BY THE MW IN THE SAME WAY.
YOU'RE MY ONLY FRIEND, FATHER. PLEASE DON'T BETRAY ME!
BETRAY YOU ?
YOU BLABBED TO THE PRESS, DIDN'T YOU!
THAT WAS UNDERHANDED OF YOU! AND WHAT WILL IT ACHIEVE, ANYWAY?
WHAT WILL IT ACHIEVE ?
HAVE A LOOK AT THIS! WHY, AT THIS VERY MOMENT...

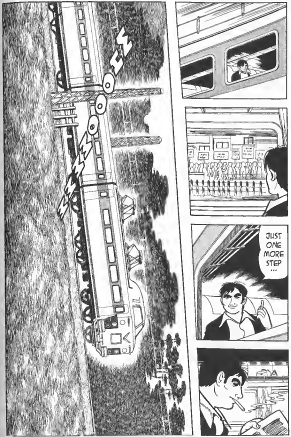

THE DIET IS INVESTIGATING THE EVENTS OF THAT DAY!
LOOK!
IN AN EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE DIET, THE PRIMARY WITNESS IS ABOUT TO TAKE THE STAND.
WE WILL NOW TAKE QUESTIONS REGARDING THE OKINO MAFUNE INCIDENT.
MR. EIKAKU NAKATA!

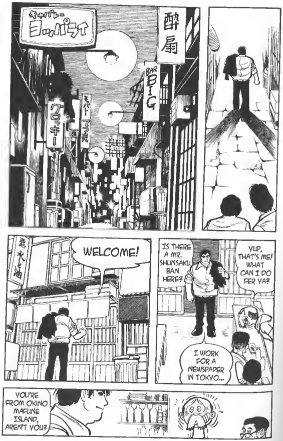

MR. NAKATA, IN 19XX, IS IT TRUE THAT THE OKAYAMA CABINET
ASKED YOU TO SPEARHEAD A COVER-UP OPERATION AFTER AN MW GAS LEAK AT A FOREIGN MILITARY FACILITY ON OKINO MAFUNE ISLAND?
I NEVER
RECEIVED SUCH INSTRUCTIONS.
DON'T LIE! TELL THE TRUTH!
YOU CAN'T FOOL US!
ARE YOU AWARE OF AN INCIDENT IN WHICH ALL OF THE RESIDENTS OF OKINO MAFUNE ISLAND DIED OF UNNATURAL CAUSES?
I READ ABOUT IT IN THE PAPERS.
I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ELSE.
BOO!
BOO!
BOO!

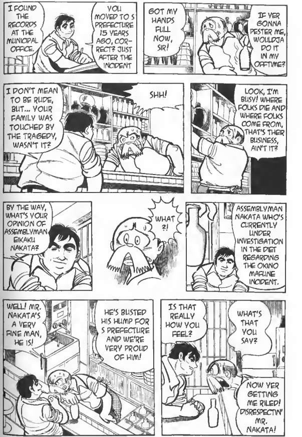

I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT.
I RECALL NO SUCH THING.
BOO!
BOO!
BOO!
BOO!
BOO!
I DON'T RECALL
ANY SUCH EVENT.
BOO!
BOO!
BOO!
BOOO!
I KNOW OF NOBODY BY THAT NAME.
BOO!
BOO!
BOO!
CHAIRMAN!
WOULD YOU CALL FOR ORDER, PLEASE!
BOO
"AHEM"
I HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO RECOLLECTION OF THAT.
BOO! BOO! BOO! BOO! BOO! BOO!
BOOOO! BOO
NO, I DON'T REMEMBER.
YOU'RE UNDER OATH!
LIAR!
I PROMISED NO SUCH THING.
BOO!
BOO!
BOO!
BOO!
BOO BOO BOO

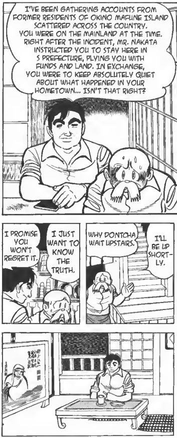

KLIK
UNBELIEVABLE!
THAT'S SOME NERVE HE'S GOT!
WHY THAT BRAZEN, IMPUDENT ...
AND YOU WANT TO BE THAT MAN'S SON-IN-LAW ?
HA! WORD GETS OUT QUICKLY!
THAT REMINDS ME...
YOUR WEDDING INVITATION.
A SHINTO PRIEST IS DOING THE SERVICE BUT DON'T LET THAT HOLD YOU BACK, FATHER!
RIP!

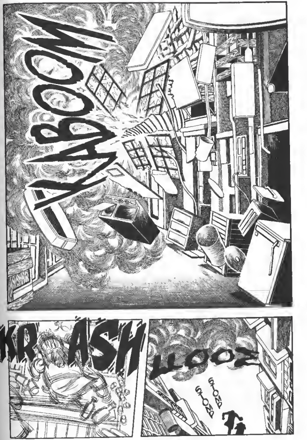

THWAK!
I CAME HERE TO TELL YOU
THAT I'LL CONTINUE TALKING TO THE PRESS AND THEY'LL CONTINUE TO INVESTIGATE!
NOW SEE HERE ...
THAT REPORTER'S A SNAKE! IF YOU PLAY WITH FIRE, YOU'RE GOING TO GET BURNED!
I DON'T WANT TO FIGHT YOU.
BUT I'LL DO IT IF I HAVE TO.
GIVE MY REGARDS TO YOUR REPORTER FRIEND.

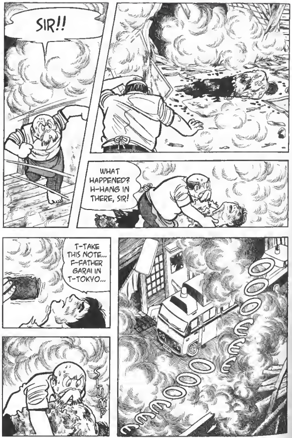

JUST ONE MORE STEP ...


キャバレー
ヨッパライ
酔扇
BAR BIG
グロッキー
火と油
WELCOME!
IS THERE A MR. SHUNSAKU BAN HERE?
YUP, THAT'S ME! WHAT CAN I DO FER YA?
I WORK FOR A NEWSPAPER IN TOKYO...
YOU'RE FROM OKINO MAFUNE ISLAND, AREN'T YOU?


I FOUND THE RECORDS AT THE MUNICIPAL OFFICE.
YOU MOVED TO S PREFECTURE 15 YEARS AGO, CORRECT? JUST AFTER THE INCIDENT
GOT MY HANDS FULL NOW, SIR!
IF YER GONNA PESTER ME, WOULDJA DO IT IN MY OFFTIME?
I DON'T MEAN TO BE RUDE, BUT... YOUR FAMILY WAS TOUCHED BY THE TRAGEDY, WASN'T IT?
SHH!
LOOK, I'M BUSY! WHERE FOLKS DIE AND WHERE FOLKS COME FROM, THAT'S THEIR BUSINESS, AIN'T IT?
BY THE WAY, WHAT'S YOUR OPINION OF ASSEMBLYMAN EIKAKU NAKATA?
WHAT?!
ASSEMBLYMAN NAKATA WHO'S CURRENTLY UNDER INVESTIGATION IN THE DIET REGARDING THE OKINO MAFUNE INCIDENT.
WELL! MR. NAKATA'S A VERY FINE MAN, HE IS!
HE'S BUSTED HIS HUMP FOR S PREFECTURE AND WE'RE VERY PROUD OF HIM!
IS THAT REALLY HOW YOU FEEL?
WHAT'S THAT YOU SAY?
NOW YER GETTING ME RILED! DISRESPECTIN' MR. NAKATA!

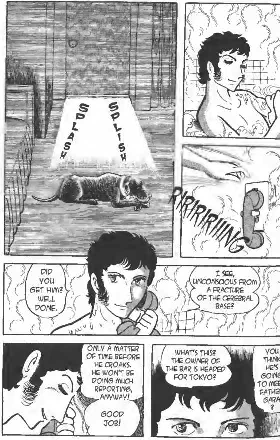

I'VE BEEN GATHERING ACCOUNTS FROM FORMER RESIDENTS OF OKINO MAFUNE ISLAND SCATTERED ACROSS THE COUNTRY. YOU WERE ON THE MAINLAND AT THE TIME. RIGHT AFTER THE INCIDENT, MR. NAKATA INSTRUCTED YOU TO STAY HERE IN S PREFECTURE, PLYING YOU WITH FUNDS AND LAND. IN EXCHANGE, YOU WERE TO KEEP ABSOLUTELY QUIET ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED IN YOUR HOMETOWN... ISN'T THAT RIGHT?
JUST WHAT'RE YOU TRYIN' TO GET ME TO SAY?
LISTEN HERE, SIR...
THERE ARE A LOT OF PEOPLE WHO WENT THROUGH THE SAME THING YOU DID. HOW ABOUT IT? WILL YOU TELL ME YOUR STORY?
I PROMISE YOU WON'T REGRET IT.
I JUST WANT TO KNOW THE TRUTH.
WHY DONTCHA WAIT UPSTAIRS.
I'LL BE UP SHORTLY.
FHOOO

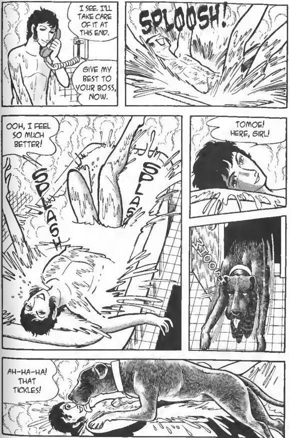

KABOOM
KRASH
WOOZ
STOMP
STOMP

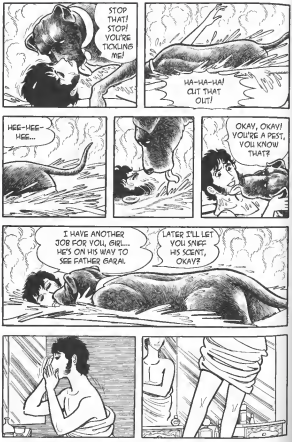

SIR!!
WHAT HAPPENED? H-HANG IN THERE, SIR!
T-TAKE THIS NOTE... F-FATHER GARAI IN T-TOKYO...
OOOOEEEE
OOOOEEEE
SLUMP

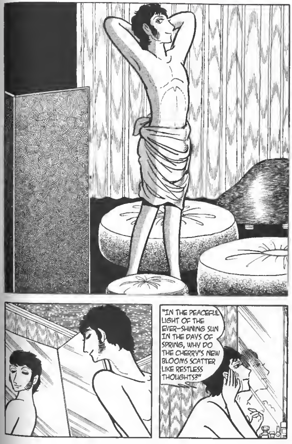
CHAPTER NINETEEN

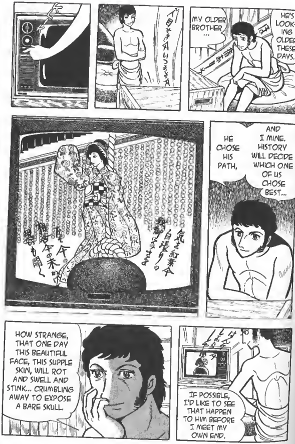
ARABESQUE

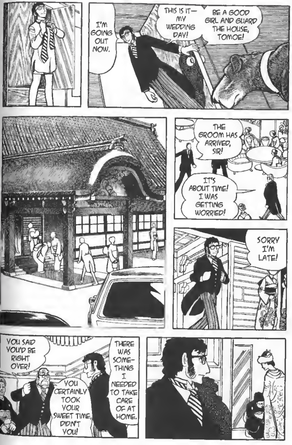

SPLASH
SPLISH
RIRIRIRIIING
DID YOU GET HIM? WELL DONE.
I SEE, UNCONSCIOUS FROM A FRACTURE OF THE CEREBRAL BASE?
ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE HE CROAKS. HE WON'T BE DOING MUCH REPORTING, ANYWAY!
GOOD JOB!
WHAT'S THIS? THE OWNER OF THE BAR IS HEADED FOR TOKYO?
YOU THINK HE'S GOING TO MEET FATHER GARAI?

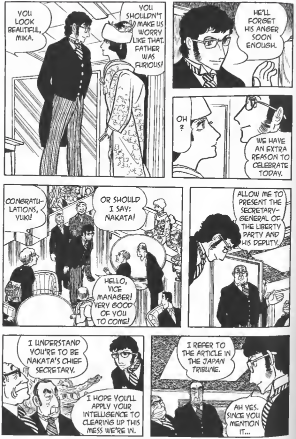

I SEE. I'LL TAKE CARE OF IT AT THIS END.
GIVE MY BEST TO YOUR BOSS, NOW.
SPLOOSH!
OOH, I FEEL SO MUCH BETTER!
SPLASH
SPLASH
TOMOE! HERE, GIRL!
SWOOSH
AH-HA-HA! THAT TICKLES!

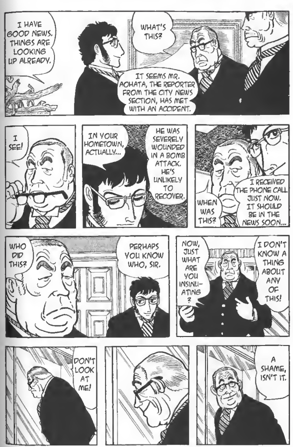

STOP THAT! STOP! YOU'RE TICKLING ME!
HA-HA-HA! CUT THAT OUT!
HEE-HEE-HEE...
OKAY, OKAY! YOU'RE A PEST, YOU KNOW THAT?
I HAVE ANOTHER JOB FOR YOU, GIRL... HE'S ON HIS WAY TO SEE FATHER GARAI.
LATER I'LL LET YOU SNIFF HIS SCENT, OKAY?

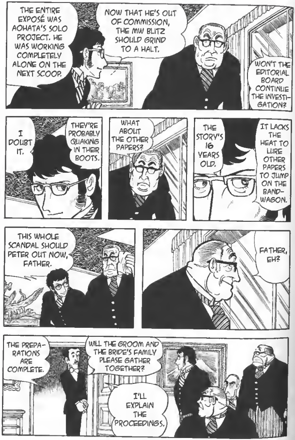

"IN THE PEACEFUL LIGHT OF THE EVER-SHINING SUN IN THE DAYS OF SPRING, WHY DO THE CHERRY'S NEW BLOOMS SCATTER LIKE RESTLESS THOUGHTS?"

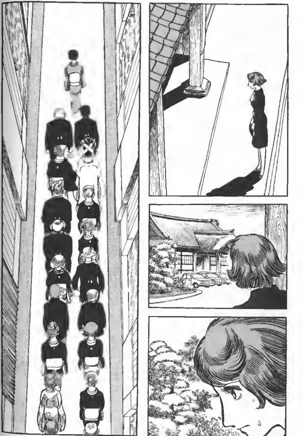

MY OLDER BROTHER...
HE'S LOOKING OLDER THESE DAYS.
HE CHOSE HIS PATH,
AND I MINE. HISTORY WILL DECIDE WHICH ONE OF US CHOSE BEST...
HOW STRANGE, THAT ONE DAY THIS BEAUTIFUL FACE, THIS SUPPLE SKIN, WILL ROT AND SWELL AND STINK... CRUMBLING AWAY TO EXPOSE A BARE SKULL.
IF POSSIBLE, I'D LIKE TO SEE THAT HAPPEN TO HIM BEFORE I MEET MY OWN END.

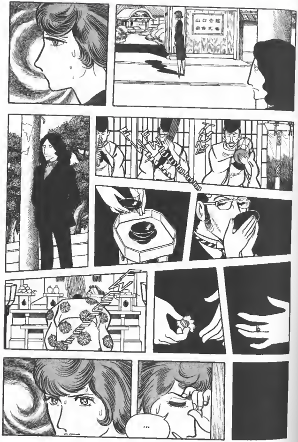

I'M GOING OUT NOW.
THIS IS IT— MY WEDDING DAY!
BE A GOOD GIRL AND GUARD THE HOUSE, TOMOE!
THE GROOM HAS ARRIVED, SIR!
IT'S ABOUT TIME! I WAS GETTING WORRIED!
SORRY I'M LATE!
YOU SAID YOU'D BE RIGHT OVER!
YOU CERTAINLY TOOK YOUR SWEET TIME, DIDN'T YOU!
THERE WAS SOMETHING I NEEDED TO TAKE CARE OF AT HOME.

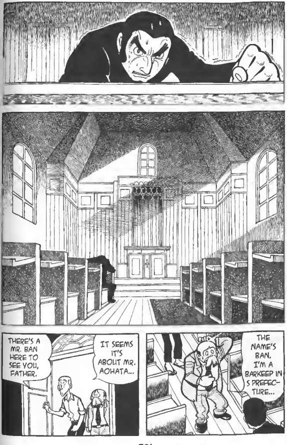

YOU LOOK BEAUTIFUL, MIKA.
YOU SHOULDN'T MAKE US WORRY LIKE THAT. FATHER WAS FURIOUS!
HE'LL FORGET HIS ANGER SOON ENOUGH.
OH?
WE HAVE AN EXTRA REASON TO CELEBRATE TODAY.
CONGRATULATIONS, YUKI!
OR SHOULD I SAY: NAKATA!
HELLO, VICE MANAGER! VERY GOOD OF YOU TO COME!
ALLOW ME TO PRESENT THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE LIBERTY PARTY AND HIS DEPUTY.
I UNDERSTAND YOU'RE TO BE NAKATA'S CHIEF SECRETARY.
I HOPE YOU'LL APPLY YOUR INTELLIGENCE TO CLEARING UP THIS MESS WE'RE IN.
I REFER TO THE ARTICLE IN THE *JAPAN TRIBUNE*.
AH YES. SINCE YOU MENTION IT...

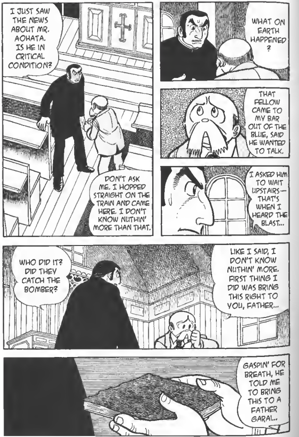

I HAVE GOOD NEWS. THINGS ARE LOOKING UP ALREADY.
WHAT'S THIS?
IT SEEMS MR. AOHATA, THE REPORTER FROM THE CITY NEWS SECTION, HAS MET WITH AN ACCIDENT.
I SEE!
IN YOUR HOMETOWN, ACTUALLY...
HE WAS SEVERELY WOUNDED IN A BOMB ATTACK. HE'S UNLIKELY TO RECOVER.
WHEN WAS THIS?
I RECEIVED THE PHONE CALL JUST NOW. IT SHOULD BE IN THE NEWS SOON...
WHO DID THIS?
PERHAPS YOU KNOW WHO, SIR.
NOW, JUST WHAT ARE YOU INSINUATING?
I DON'T KNOW A THING ABOUT ANY OF THIS!
DON'T LOOK AT ME!
A SHAME, ISN'T IT.

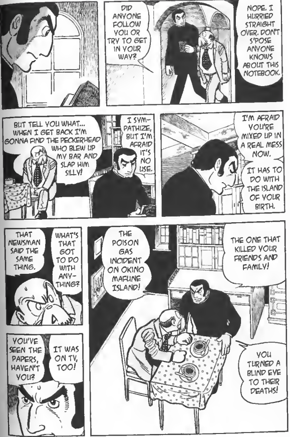

THE ENTIRE EXPOSÉ WAS AOHATA'S SOLO PROJECT. HE WAS WORKING COMPLETELY ALONE ON THE NEXT SCOOP.
NOW THAT HE'S OUT OF COMMISSION, THE MW BLITZ SHOULD GRIND TO A HALT.
WON'T THE EDITORIAL BOARD CONTINUE THE INVESTIGATION?
I DOUBT IT.
THEY'RE PROBABLY QUAKING IN THEIR BOOTS.
WHAT ABOUT THE OTHER PAPERS?
THE STORY'S 16 YEARS OLD.
IT LACKS THE HEAT TO LURE OTHER PAPERS TO JUMP ON THE BANDWAGON.
THIS WHOLE SCANDAL SHOULD PETER OUT NOW, FATHER.
FATHER, EH?
THE PREPARATIONS ARE COMPLETE.
WILL THE GROOM AND THE BRIDE'S FAMILY PLEASE GATHER TOGETHER?
I'LL EXPLAIN THE PROCEEDINGS.

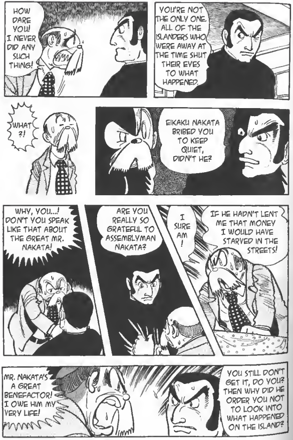


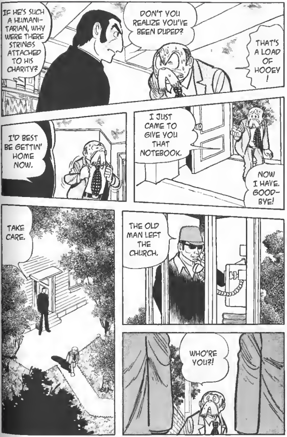

山口会館
...

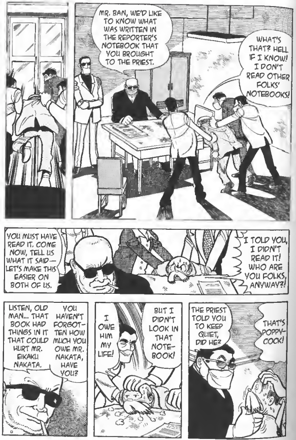

THERE'S A MR. BAN HERE TO SEE YOU, FATHER.
IT SEEMS IT'S ABOUT MR. AOHATA...
THE NAME'S BAN. I'M A BARKEEP IN S PREFECTURE...

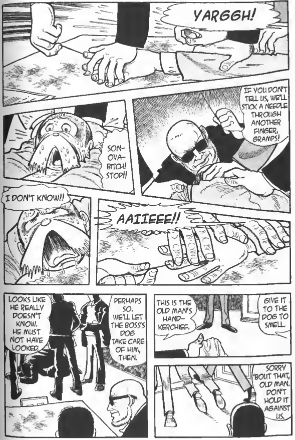

I JUST SAW THE NEWS ABOUT MR. AOHATA. IS HE IN CRITICAL CONDITION?
DON'T ASK ME. I HOPPED STRAIGHT ON THE TRAIN AND CAME HERE. I DON'T KNOW NUTHIN' MORE THAN THAT.
WHAT ON EARTH HAPPENED?
THAT FELLOW CAME TO MY BAR OUT OF THE BLUE, SAID HE WANTED TO TALK.
I ASKED HIM TO WAIT UPSTAIRS— THAT'S WHEN I HEARD THE BLAST...
WHO DID IT? DID THEY CATCH THE BOMBER?
LIKE I SAID, I DON'T KNOW NUTHIN' MORE. FIRST THING I DID WAS BRING THIS RIGHT TO YOU, FATHER...
GASPIN' FOR BREATH, HE TOLD ME TO BRING THIS TO A FATHER GARAI...

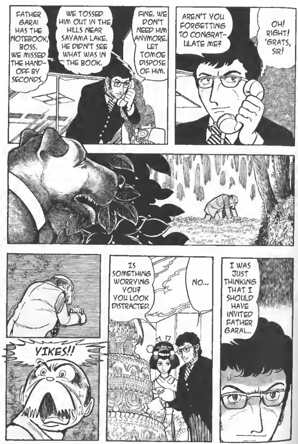

DID ANYONE FOLLOW YOU OR TRY TO GET IN YOUR WAY?
NOPE. I HURRIED STRAIGHT OVER. DON'T S'POSE ANYONE KNOWS ABOUT THIS NOTEBOOK.
BUT TELL YOU WHAT... WHEN I GET BACK I'M GONNA FIND THE PECKERHEAD WHO BLEW UP MY BAR AND SLAP HIM SILLY!
I SYMPATHIZE, BUT I'M AFRAID IT'S NO USE.
I'M AFRAID YOU'RE MIXED UP IN A REAL MESS NOW.
IT HAS TO DO WITH THE ISLAND OF YOUR BIRTH.
THAT NEWSMAN SAID THE SAME THING.
WHAT'S THAT GOT TO DO WITH ANYTHING?
YOU'VE SEEN THE PAPERS, HAVEN'T YOU?
IT WAS ON TV, TOO!
THE POISON GAS INCIDENT ON OKINO MAFUNE ISLAND!
THE ONE THAT KILLED YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY!
YOU TURNED A BLIND EYE TO THEIR DEATHS!


HOW DARE YOU! I NEVER DID ANY SUCH THING!
YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE. ALL OF THE ISLANDERS WHO WERE AWAY AT THE TIME SHUT THEIR EYES TO WHAT HAPPENED.
WHAT?!
EIKAKU NAKATA BRIBED YOU TO KEEP QUIET, DIDN'T HE?
WHY, YOU...! DON'T YOU SPEAK LIKE THAT ABOUT THE GREAT MR. NAKATA!
ARE YOU REALLY SO GRATEFUL TO ASSEMBLYMAN NAKATA?
I SURE AM!
IF HE HADN'T LENT ME THAT MONEY I WOULD HAVE STARVED IN THE STREETS!
MR. NAKATA'S A GREAT BENEFACTOR! I OWE HIM MY VERY LIFE!
YOU STILL DON'T GET IT, DO YOU? THEN WHY DID HE ORDER YOU NOT TO LOOK INTO WHAT HAPPENED ON THE ISLAND?


IF HE'S SUCH A HUMANITARIAN, WHY WERE THERE STRINGS ATTACHED TO HIS CHARITY?
DON'T YOU REALIZE YOU'VE BEEN DUPED?
THAT'S A LOAD OF HOOEY!
I'D BEST BE GETTIN' HOME NOW.
I JUST CAME TO GIVE YOU THAT NOTEBOOK.
NOW I HAVE. GOOD-BYE!
TAKE CARE.
THE OLD MAN LEFT THE CHURCH.
WHO'RE YOU?!

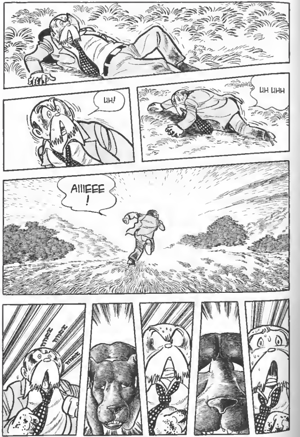

MR. BAN, WE'D LIKE TO KNOW WHAT WAS WRITTEN IN THE REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK THAT YOU BROUGHT TO THE PRIEST.
WHAT'S THAT? HELL IF I KNOW! I DON'T READ OTHER FOLKS' NOTEBOOKS!
YOU MUST HAVE READ IT. COME NOW, TELL US WHAT IT SAID— LET'S MAKE THIS EASIER ON BOTH OF US.
I TOLD YOU, I DIDN'T READ IT! WHO ARE YOU FOLKS, ANYWAY?!
LISTEN, OLD MAN... THAT BOOK HAD THINGS IN IT THAT COULD HURT MR. EIKAKU NAKATA.
YOU HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN HOW MUCH YOU OWE MR. NAKATA, HAVE YOU?
I OWE HIM MY LIFE!
BUT I DIDN'T LOOK IN THAT NOTEBOOK!
THE PRIEST TOLD YOU TO KEEP QUIET, DID HE?
THAT'S POPPYCOCK!

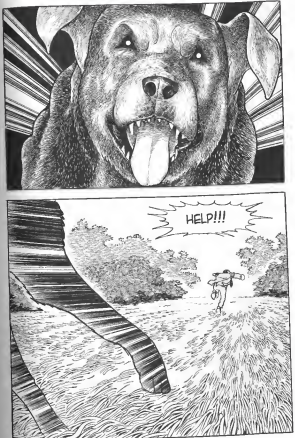

YARGGH!
SON-OVA-BITCH! STOP!!
IF YOU DON'T TELL US, WE'LL STICK A NEEDLE THROUGH ANOTHER FINGER, GRAMPS!
I DON'T KNOW!!
AAIIEEE!!
LOOKS LIKE HE REALLY DOESN'T KNOW. HE MUST NOT HAVE LOOKED.
PERHAPS SO. WE'LL LET THE BOSS'S DOG TAKE CARE OF HIM, THEN.
THIS IS THE OLD MAN'S HANDKERCHIEF.
GIVE IT TO THE DOG TO SMELL.
SORRY 'BOUT THAT, OLD MAN. DON'T HOLD IT AGAINST US.

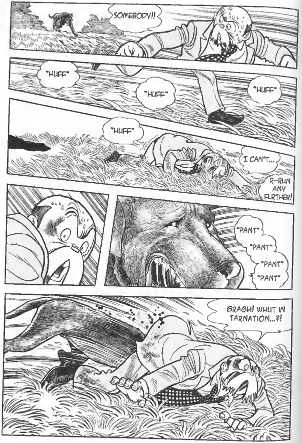

FATHER GARAI HAS THE NOTEBOOK, BOSS. WE MISSED THE HAND-OFF BY SECONDS.
WE TOSSED HIM OUT IN THE HILLS NEAR SAYAMA LAKE. HE DIDN'T SEE WHAT WAS IN THE BOOK.
FINE. WE DON'T NEED HIM ANYMORE. LET TOMOE DISPOSE OF HIM.
AREN'T YOU FORGETTING TO CONGRATULATE ME?
OH! RIGHT! 'GRATS, SIR!
YIKES!!
IS SOMETHING WORRYING YOU? YOU LOOK DISTRACTED.
NO...
I WAS JUST THINKING THAT I SHOULD HAVE INVITED FATHER GARAI...

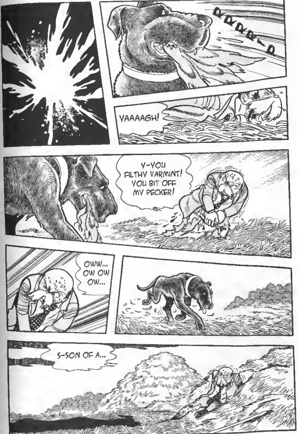
CHAPTER TWENTY

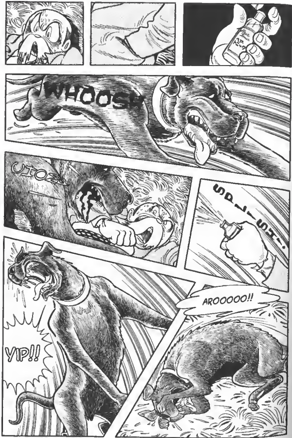
INVERSION

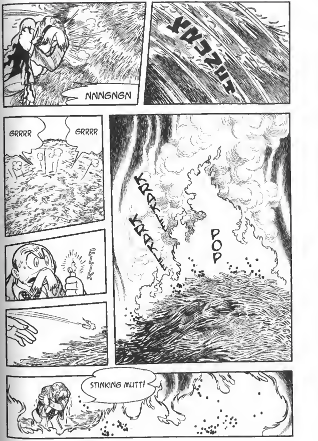

UH!
UH UHH
AIIIEEE !
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF

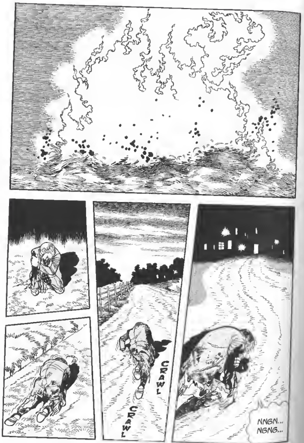

HELP!!!

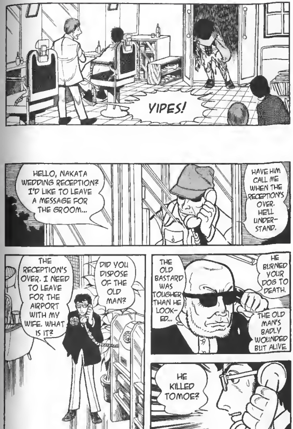

SOMEBODY!!
"HUFF"
"HUFF"
"HUFF"
"HUFF"
I CAN'T...
R-RUN ANY FURTHER!
"PANT"
"PANT"
"PANT"
"PANT"
GRAGH! WHUT IN TARNATION...?!

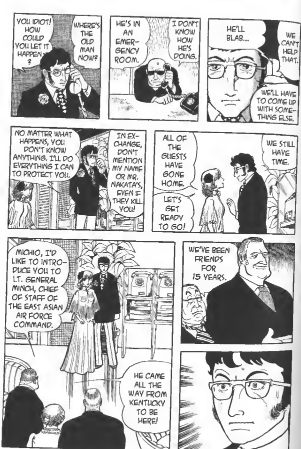

QQQQ—Q
VAAAAGH!
Y-YOU FILTHY VARMINT! YOU BIT OFF MY PECKER!
OWW... OW OW OW...
S-SON OF A...

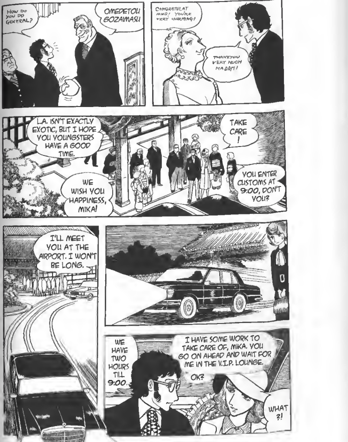

WHOOSH
AROOOOO!!
YIP!!

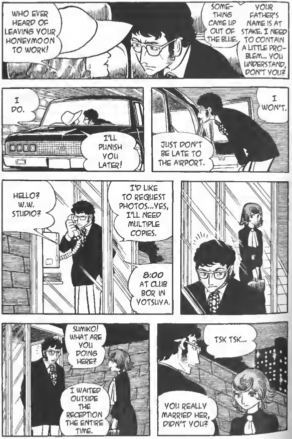

NNNGNGN
GRRRR
GRRRR
KRAK-L
KRAK-L
POP
FLIK
STINKING MUTT!

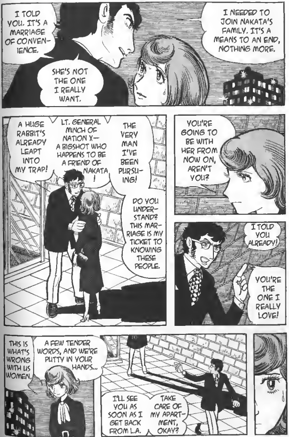

CRAWL
CRAWL
NNGN... NGNG...

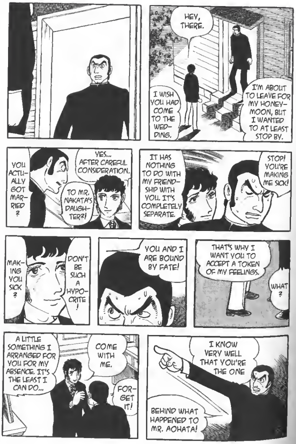

YIPES!
HELLO, NAKATA WEDDING RECEPTION? I'D LIKE TO LEAVE A MESSAGE FOR THE GROOM...
HAVE HIM CALL ME WHEN THE RECEPTION'S OVER. HE'LL UNDERSTAND.
THE RECEPTION'S OVER. I NEED TO LEAVE FOR THE AIRPORT WITH MY WIFE. WHAT IS IT?
DID YOU DISPOSE OF THE OLD MAN?
THE OLD BASTARD WAS TOUGHER THAN HE LOOKED...
HE BURNED YOUR DOG TO DEATH.
THE OLD MAN'S BADLY WOUNDED BUT ALIVE.
HE KILLED TOMOE?

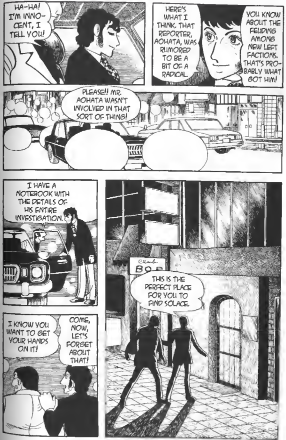

YOU IDIOT! HOW COULD YOU LET IT HAPPEN?
WHERE'S THE OLD MAN NOW?
HE'S IN AN EMERGENCY ROOM.
I DON'T KNOW HOW HE'S DOING.
HE'LL BLAB...
WE CAN'T HELP THAT.
WE'LL HAVE TO COME UP WITH SOMETHING ELSE.
NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING. I'LL DO EVERYTHING I CAN TO PROTECT YOU.
IN EXCHANGE, DON'T MENTION MY NAME OR MR. NAKATA'S, EVEN IF THEY KILL YOU!
ALL OF THE GUESTS HAVE GONE HOME.
WE STILL HAVE TIME.
LET'S GET READY TO GO!
MICHIO, I'D LIKE TO INTRODUCE YOU TO LT. GENERAL MINCH, CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE EAST ASIAN AIR FORCE COMMAND.
WE'VE BEEN FRIENDS FOR 15 YEARS.
HE CAME ALL THE WAY FROM KENTUCKY TO BE HERE!

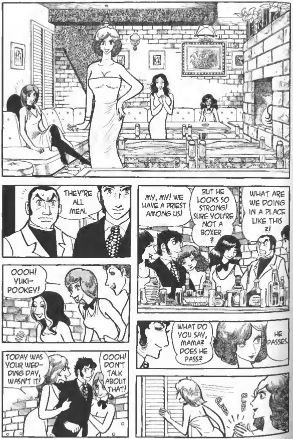

How do you do General?
OMEDETOU GOZAIMASU
Congratulations! You're very charming!
Thankyou very much madam!
L.A. ISN'T EXACTLY EXOTIC, BUT I HOPE YOU YOUNGSTERS HAVE A GOOD TIME.
TAKE CARE!
WE WISH YOU HAPPINESS, MIKA!
YOU ENTER CUSTOMS AT 9:00, DON'T YOU?
I'LL MEET YOU AT THE AIRPORT. I WON'T BE LONG.
WE HAVE TWO HOURS TILL 9:00.
I HAVE SOME WORK TO TAKE CARE OF, MIKA. YOU GO ON AHEAD AND WAIT FOR ME IN THE V.I.P. LOUNGE.
OK?
WHAT?!

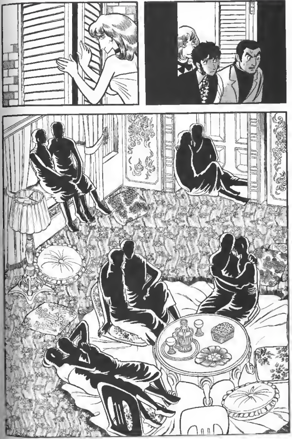

WHO EVER HEARD OF LEAVING YOUR HONEYMOON TO WORK!
SOME-THING CAME UP OUT OF THE BLUE.
YOUR FATHER'S NAME IS AT STAKE. I NEED TO CONTAIN A LITTLE PRO-BLEM... YOU UNDERSTAND, DON'T YOU?
I DO.
I'LL PUNISH YOU LATER!
I WON'T.
JUST DON'T BE LATE TO THE AIRPORT.
HELLO? W.W. STUDIO?
I'D LIKE TO REQUEST PHOTOS...YES, I'LL NEED MULTIPLE COPIES.
8:00 AT CLUB BOR IN YOTSUYA.
SUMIKO! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
I WAITED OUTSIDE THE RECEPTION THE ENTIRE TIME.
TSK TSK...
YOU REALLY MARRIED HER, DIDN'T YOU?

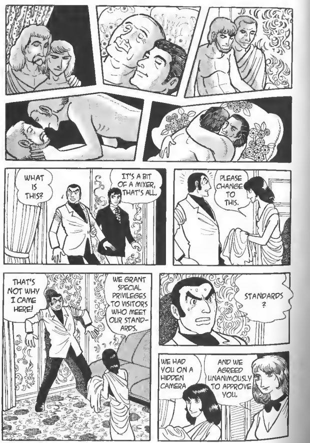

I TOLD YOU. IT'S A MARRIAGE OF CONVEN-IENCE.
SHE'S NOT THE ONE I REALLY WANT.
I NEEDED TO JOIN NAKATA'S FAMILY. IT'S A MEANS TO AN END, NOTHING MORE.
A HUGE RABBIT'S ALREADY LEAPT INTO MY TRAP!
LT. GENERAL MINCH OF NATION X— A BIGSHOT WHO HAPPENS TO BE A FRIEND OF NAKATA!
THE VERY MAN I'VE BEEN PURSU-ING!
DO YOU UNDER-STAND? THIS MAR-RIAGE IS MY TICKET TO KNOWING THESE PEOPLE.
YOU'RE GOING TO BE WITH HER FROM NOW ON, AREN'T YOU?
I TOLD YOU ALREADY!
YOU'RE THE ONE I REALLY LOVE!
THIS IS WHAT'S WRONG WITH US WOMEN.
A FEW TENDER WORDS, AND WE'RE PUTTY IN YOUR HANDS...
I'LL SEE YOU AS SOON AS I GET BACK FROM L.A.
TAKE CARE OF MY APART-MENT, OKAY?

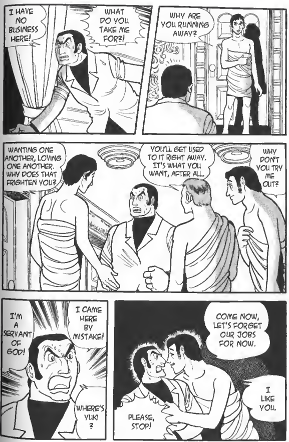

HEY, THERE.
I'M ABOUT TO LEAVE FOR MY HONEYMOON, BUT I WANTED TO AT LEAST STOP BY.
I WISH YOU HAD COME TO THE WEDDING.
YOU ACTUALLY GOT MARRIED?
YES... AFTER CAREFUL CONSIDERATION.
TO MR. NAKATA'S DAUGHTER?!
IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH MY FRIENDSHIP WITH YOU. IT'S COMPLETELY SEPARATE.
STOP! YOU'RE MAKING ME SICK!
MAKING YOU SICK?
DON'T BE SUCH A HYPOCRITE!
YOU AND I ARE BOUND BY FATE!
THAT'S WHY I WANT YOU TO ACCEPT A TOKEN OF MY FEELINGS.
WHAT?
A LITTLE SOMETHING I ARRANGED FOR YOU FOR MY ABSENCE. IT'S THE LEAST I CAN DO...
COME WITH ME.
FORGET IT!
I KNOW VERY WELL THAT YOU'RE THE ONE
BEHIND WHAT HAPPENED TO MR. AOHATA!

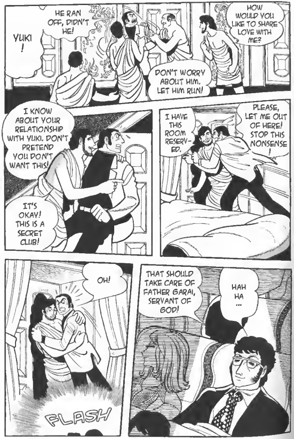

HA-HA! I'M INNOCENT, I TELL YOU!
HERE'S WHAT I THINK. THAT REPORTER, AOHATA, WAS RUMORED TO BE A BIT OF A RADICAL.
YOU KNOW ABOUT THE FEUDING AMONG NEW LEFT FACTIONS. THAT'S PROBABLY WHAT GOT HIM!
PLEASE!! MR. AOHATA WASN'T INVOLVED IN THAT SORT OF THING!
I HAVE A NOTEBOOK WITH THE DETAILS OF HIS ENTIRE INVESTIGATION.
I KNOW YOU WANT TO GET YOUR HANDS ON IT!
COME, NOW, LET'S FORGET ABOUT THAT!
Club
BO
THIS IS THE PERFECT PLACE FOR YOU TO FIND SOLACE.

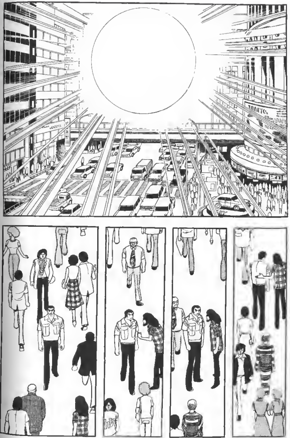

THEY'RE ALL MEN.
MY, MY! WE HAVE A PRIEST AMONG US!
BUT HE LOOKS SO STRONG! SURE YOU'RE NOT A BOXER?
WHAT ARE WE DOING IN A PLACE LIKE THIS?!
OOOH! YUKI-POOKEY!
WHAT DO YOU SAY, MAMA? DOES HE PASS?
HE PASSES.
TODAY WAS YOUR WEDDING DAY, WASN'T IT!
OOOH! DON'T TALK ABOUT THAT!
CLAP
CLAP

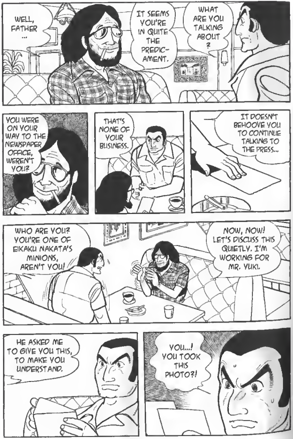


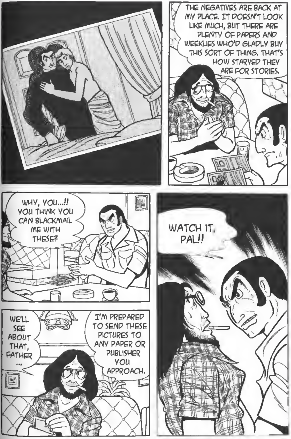

WHAT IS THIS?
IT'S A BIT OF A MIXER, THAT'S ALL.
PLEASE CHANGE TO THIS.
THAT'S NOT WHY I CAME HERE!
WE GRANT SPECIAL PRIVILEGES TO VISITORS WHO MEET OUR STANDARDS.
STANDARDS?
WE HAD YOU ON A HIDDEN CAMERA
AND WE AGREED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE YOU.

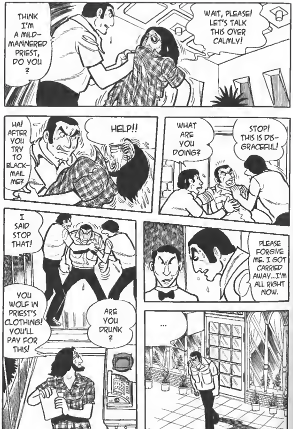

I HAVE NO BUSINESS HERE!
WHAT DO YOU TAKE ME FOR?!
WHY ARE YOU RUNNING AWAY?
WANTING ONE ANOTHER, LOVING ONE ANOTHER. WHY DOES THAT FRIGHTEN YOU?
YOU'LL GET USED TO IT RIGHT AWAY. IT'S WHAT YOU WANT, AFTER ALL.
WHY DON'T YOU TRY ME OUT?
I'M A SERVANT OF GOD!
I CAME HERE BY MISTAKE!
WHERE'S YUKI?
COME NOW, LET'S FORGET OUR JOBS FOR NOW.
I LIKE YOU.
PLEASE, STOP!

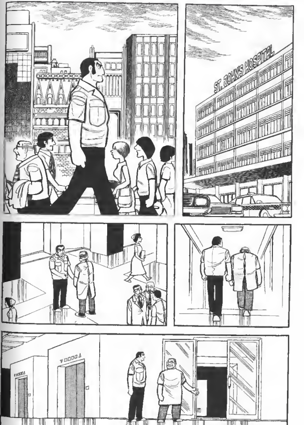

YUKI!
HE RAN OFF, DIDN'T HE!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT HIM. LET HIM RUN!
HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO SHARE LOVE WITH ME?
I KNOW ABOUT YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YUKI. DON'T PRETEND YOU DON'T WANT THIS!
IT'S OKAY! THIS IS A SECRET CLUB!
I HAVE THIS ROOM RESERVED.
PLEASE, LET ME OUT OF HERE! STOP THIS NONSENSE!
OH!
FLASH
THAT SHOULD TAKE CARE OF FATHER GARAI, SERVANT OF GOD!
HAH HA ...

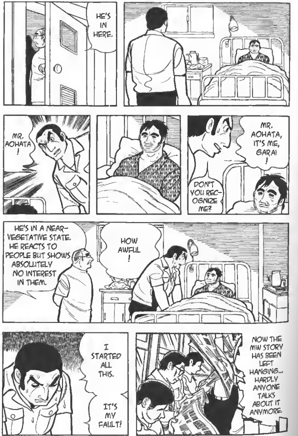


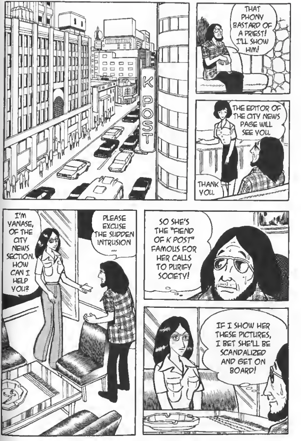

WELL, FATHER ...
IT SEEMS YOU'RE IN QUITE THE PREDICAMENT.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
YOU WERE ON YOUR WAY TO THE NEWSPAPER OFFICE, WEREN'T YOU?
THAT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS.
IT DOESN'T BEHOOVE YOU TO CONTINUE TALKING TO THE PRESS...
WHO ARE YOU? YOU'RE ONE OF EIKAKU NAKATA'S MINIONS, AREN'T YOU!
NOW, NOW! LET'S DISCUSS THIS QUIETLY. I'M WORKING FOR MR. YUKI.
HE ASKED ME TO GIVE YOU THIS, TO MAKE YOU UNDERSTAND.
YOU...! YOU TOOK THIS PHOTO?!

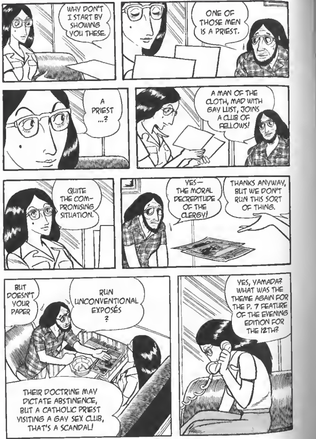

THE NEGATIVES ARE BACK AT MY PLACE. IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE MUCH, BUT THERE ARE PLENTY OF PAPERS AND WEEKLIES WHO'D GLADLY BUY THIS SORT OF THING. THAT'S HOW STARVED THEY ARE FOR STORIES.
WHY, YOU...!! YOU THINK YOU CAN BLACKMAIL ME WITH THESE?
WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT, FATHER ...
I'M PREPARED TO SEND THESE PICTURES TO ANY PAPER OR PUBLISHER YOU APPROACH.
WATCH IT, PAL!!

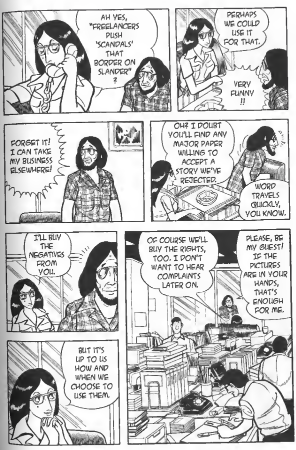

THINK I'M A MILD-MANNERED PRIEST, DO YOU ?
WAIT, PLEASE! LET'S TALK THIS OVER CALMLY!
HA! AFTER YOU TRY TO BLACKMAIL ME?
HELP!!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
STOP! THIS IS DISGRACEFUL!
I SAID STOP THAT!
YOU WOLF IN PRIEST'S CLOTHING! YOU'LL PAY FOR THIS!
ARE YOU DRUNK ?
PLEASE FORGIVE ME. I GOT CARRIED AWAY...I'M ALL RIGHT NOW.
...

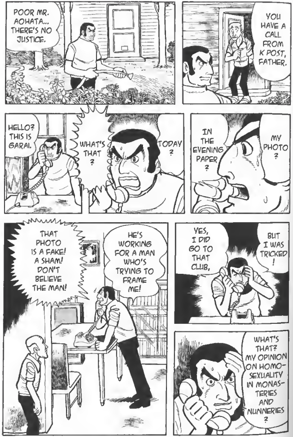

ST. JOHN'S HOSPITAL

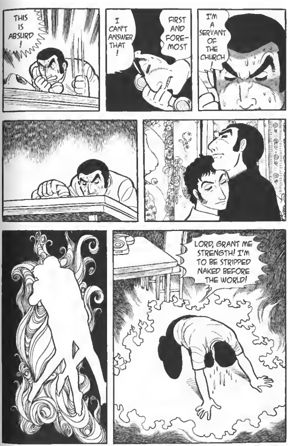

HE'S IN HERE.
MR. AOHATA!
MR. AOHATA, IT'S ME, GARAI!
DON'T YOU RECOGNIZE ME?
HE'S IN A NEAR-VEGETATIVE STATE. HE REACTS TO PEOPLE BUT SHOWS ABSOLUTELY NO INTEREST IN THEM.
HOW AWFUL!
I STARTED ALL THIS.
IT'S MY FAULT!
NOW THE MW STORY HAS BEEN LEFT HANGING... HARDLY ANYONE TALKS ABOUT IT ANYMORE.

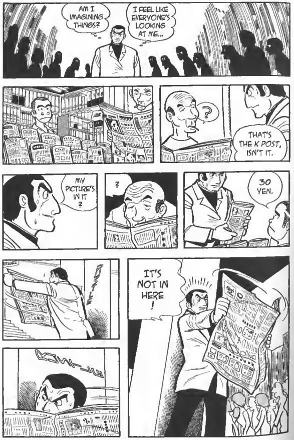

K POST
THAT PHONY BASTARD OF A PRIEST! I'LL SHOW HIM!
THE EDITOR OF THE CITY NEWS PAGE WILL SEE YOU.
THANK YOU.
I'M YANASE, OF THE CITY NEWS SECTION. HOW CAN I HELP YOU?
PLEASE EXCUSE THE SUDDEN INTRUSION...
SO SHE'S THE "FIEND OF K POST" FAMOUS FOR HER CALLS TO PURIFY SOCIETY!
IF I SHOW HER THESE PICTURES, I BET SHE'LL BE SCANDALIZED AND GET ON BOARD!

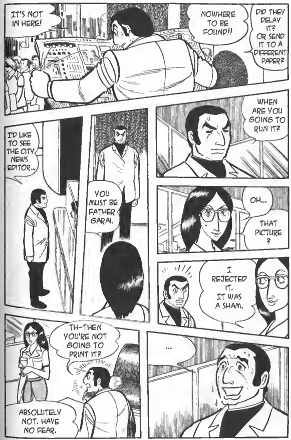

WHY DON'T I START BY SHOWING YOU THESE.
ONE OF THOSE MEN IS A PRIEST.
A PRIEST ...?
A MAN OF THE CLOTH, MAD WITH GAY LUST, JOINS A CLUB OF FELLOWS!
QUITE THE COMPROMISING SITUATION.
YES— THE MORAL DECREPITUDE OF THE CLERGY!
THANKS ANYWAY, BUT WE DON'T RUN THIS SORT OF THING.
BUT DOESN'T YOUR PAPER
RUN UNCONVENTIONAL EXPOSÉS ?
THEIR DOCTRINE MAY DICTATE ABSTINENCE, BUT A CATHOLIC PRIEST VISITING A GAY SEX CLUB, THAT'S A SCANDAL!
YES, YAMADA? WHAT WAS THE THEME AGAIN FOR THE P. 7 FEATURE OF THE EVENING EDITION FOR THE 12TH?

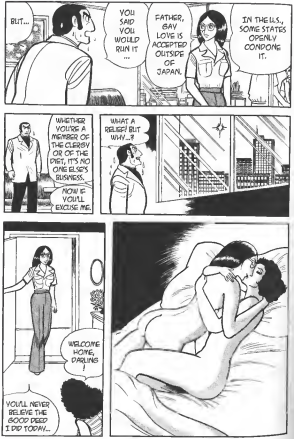

AH YES, "FREELANCERS PUSH 'SCANDALS' THAT BORDER ON SLANDER" ?
PERHAPS WE COULD USE IT FOR THAT.
VERY FUNNY !!
FORGET IT! I CAN TAKE MY BUSINESS ELSEWHERE!
OH? I DOUBT YOU'LL FIND ANY MAJOR PAPER WILLING TO ACCEPT A STORY WE'VE REJECTED.
WORD TRAVELS QUICKLY, YOU KNOW.
I'LL BUY THE NEGATIVES FROM YOU.
OF COURSE WE'LL BUY THE RIGHTS, TOO. I DON'T WANT TO HEAR COMPLAINTS LATER ON.
PLEASE, BE MY GUEST! IF THE PICTURES ARE IN YOUR HANDS, THAT'S ENOUGH FOR ME.
BUT IT'S UP TO US HOW AND WHEN WE CHOOSE TO USE THEM.


POOR MR. AOHATA... THERE'S NO JUSTICE.
YOU HAVE A CALL FROM K POST, FATHER.
HELLO? THIS IS GARAI.
WHAT'S THAT?
TODAY?
IN THE EVENING PAPER?
MY PHOTO?
THAT PHOTO IS A FAKE! A SHAM! DON'T BELIEVE THE MAN!
HE'S WORKING FOR A MAN WHO'S TRYING TO FRAME ME!
YES, I DID GO TO THAT CLUB,
BUT I WAS TRICKED!
WHAT'S THAT? MY OPINION ON HOMOSEXUALITY IN MONASTERIES AND NUNNERIES?


THIS IS ABSURD!
I CAN'T ANSWER THAT!
FIRST AND FOREMOST
I'M A SERVANT OF THE CHURCH!
LORD, GRANT ME STRENGTH! I'M TO BE STRIPPED NAKED BEFORE THE WORLD!

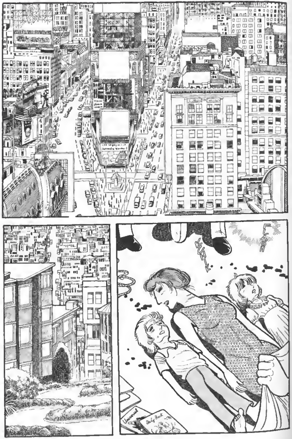

AM I IMAGINING THINGS?
I FEEL LIKE EVERYONE'S LOOKING AT ME...
?
THAT'S THE K POST, ISN'T IT.
MY PICTURE'S IN IT?
?
30 YEN.
IT'S NOT IN HERE!

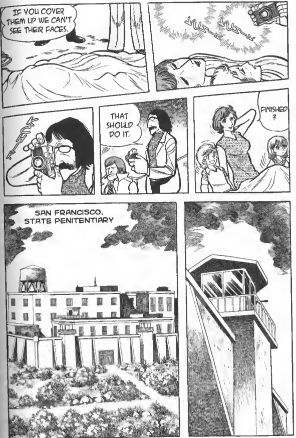

IT'S NOT IN HERE!
NOWHERE TO BE FOUND!!
DID THEY DELAY IT? OR SEND IT TO A DIFFERENT PAPER?
I'D LIKE TO SEE THE CITY NEWS EDITOR...
YOU MUST BE FATHER GARAI.
WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO RUN IT?
OH...
THAT PICTURE?
I REJECTED IT. IT WAS A SHAM.
TH-THEN YOU'RE NOT GOING TO PRINT IT?
ABSOLUTELY NOT. HAVE NO FEAR.
...

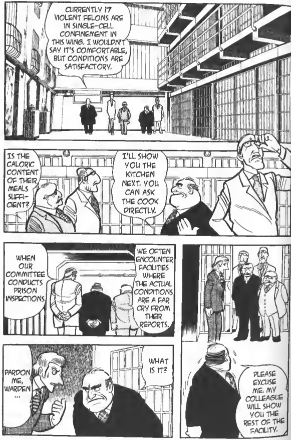

BUT...
YOU SAID YOU WOULD RUN IT ...
FATHER, GAY LOVE IS ACCEPTED OUTSIDE OF JAPAN.
IN THE U.S., SOME STATES OPENLY CONDONE IT.
WHETHER YOU'RE A MEMBER OF THE CLERGY OR OF THE DIET, IT'S NO ONE ELSE'S BUSINESS.
NOW IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME.
WHAT A RELIEF! BUT WHY...?
WELCOME HOME, DARLING!
YOU'LL NEVER BELIEVE THE GOOD DEED I DID TODAY...

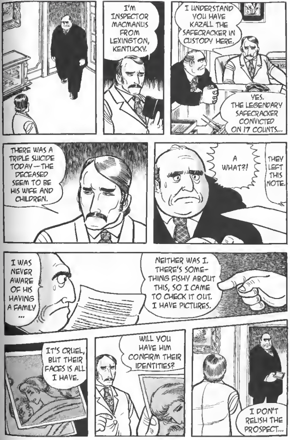
CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

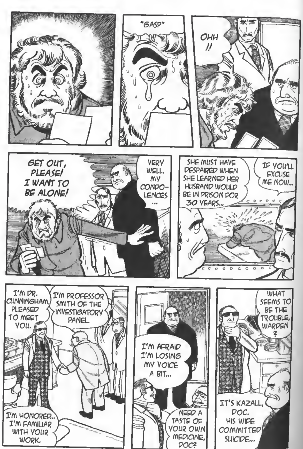
EPISODE

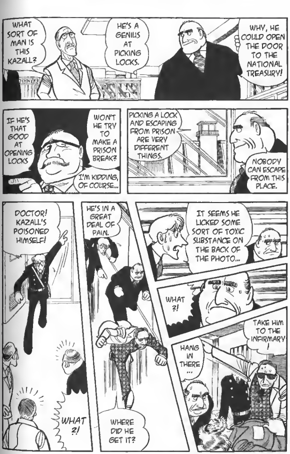

YUI—

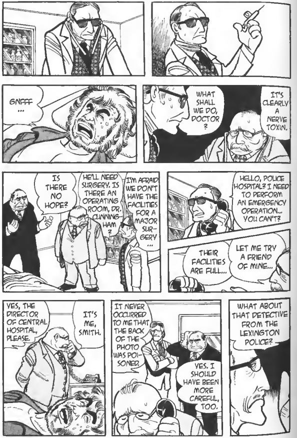

IF YOU COVER THEM UP WE CAN'T SEE THEIR FACES.
YUI— YUI—
KCHI—
THAT SHOULD DO IT.
FINISHED?
SAN FRANCISCO, STATE PENITENTIARY

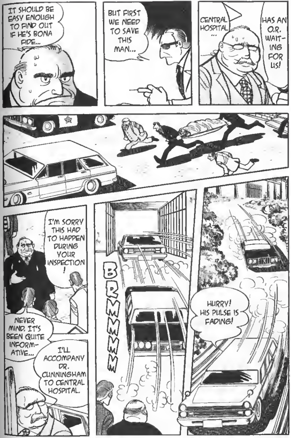

CURRENTLY 17 VIOLENT FELONS ARE IN SINGLE-CELL CONFINEMENT IN THIS WING. I WOULDN'T SAY IT'S COMFORTABLE, BUT CONDITIONS ARE SATISFACTORY.
IS THE CALORIC CONTENT OF THEIR MEALS SUFFICIENT?
I'LL SHOW YOU THE KITCHEN NEXT. YOU CAN ASK THE COOK DIRECTLY.
WHEN OUR COMMITTEE CONDUCTS PRISON INSPECTIONS
WE OFTEN ENCOUNTER FACILITIES WHERE THE ACTUAL CONDITIONS ARE A FAR CRY FROM THEIR REPORTS.
PARDON ME, WARDEN...
WHAT IS IT?
PLEASE EXCUSE ME. MY COLLEAGUE WILL SHOW YOU THE REST OF THE FACILITY.

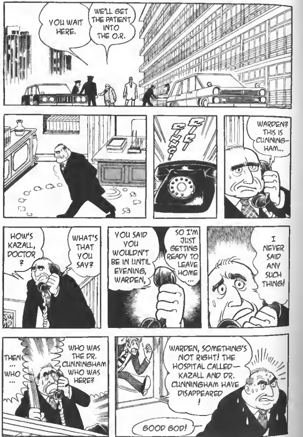

I'M INSPECTOR MACMANUS FROM LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY.
I UNDERSTAND YOU HAVE KAZALL THE SAFECRACKER IN CUSTODY HERE.
YES. THE LEGENDARY SAFECRACKER CONVICTED ON 17 COUNTS...
THERE WAS A TRIPLE SUICIDE TODAY—THE DECEASED SEEM TO BE HIS WIFE AND CHILDREN.
A WHAT?!
THEY LEFT THIS NOTE.
I WAS NEVER AWARE OF HIS HAVING A FAMILY...
NEITHER WAS I. THERE'S SOMETHING FISHY ABOUT THIS, SO I CAME TO CHECK IT OUT. I HAVE PICTURES.
IT'S CRUEL, BUT THEIR FACES IS ALL I HAVE.
WILL YOU HAVE HIM CONFIRM THEIR IDENTITIES?
I DON'T RELISH THE PROSPECT...

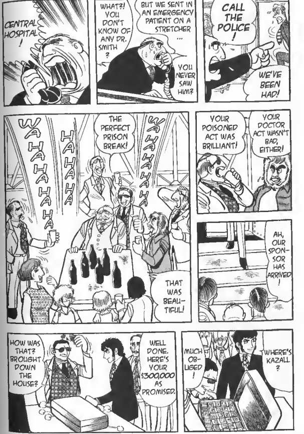

"GASP"
OHH !!
GET OUT, PLEASE! I WANT TO BE ALONE!
VERY WELL. MY CONDOLENCES...
SHE MUST HAVE DESPAIRED WHEN SHE LEARNED HER HUSBAND WOULD BE IN PRISON FOR 30 YEARS...
IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME NOW...
I'M DR. CUNNINGHAM. PLEASED TO MEET YOU.
I'M PROFESSOR SMITH OF THE INVESTIGATORY PANEL.
I'M HONORED... I'M FAMILIAR WITH YOUR WORK.
I'M AFRAID I'M LOSING MY VOICE A BIT...
NEED A TASTE OF YOUR OWN MEDICINE, DOC?
WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE TROUBLE, WARDEN?
IT'S KAZALL, DOC. HIS WIFE COMMITTED SUICIDE...

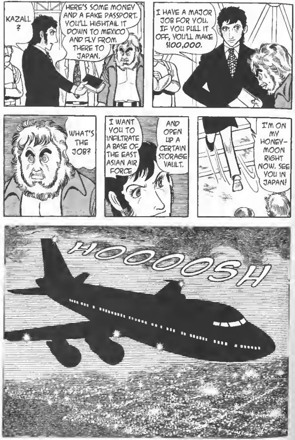

WHAT SORT OF MAN IS THIS KAZALL?
HE'S A GENIUS AT PICKING LOCKS.
WHY, HE COULD OPEN THE DOOR TO THE NATIONAL TREASURY!
IF HE'S THAT GOOD AT OPENING LOCKS
WON'T HE TRY TO MAKE A PRISON BREAK?
I'M KIDDING, OF COURSE...
PICKING A LOCK AND ESCAPING FROM PRISON ARE VERY DIFFERENT THINGS.
NOBODY CAN ESCAPE FROM THIS PLACE.
DOCTOR! KAZALL'S POISONED HIMSELF!
WHAT ?!
HE'S IN A GREAT DEAL OF PAIN.
WHERE DID HE GET IT?
IT SEEMS HE LICKED SOME SORT OF TOXIC SUBSTANCE ON THE BACK OF THE PHOTO...
WHAT ?!
TAKE HIM TO THE INFIRMARY!
HANG IN THERE...


GNFFF ...
WHAT SHALL WE DO, DOCTOR?
IT'S CLEARLY A NERVE TOXIN.
IS THERE NO HOPE?
HE'LL NEED SURGERY. IS THERE AN OPERATING ROOM, DR. CUNNINGHAM?
I'M AFRAID WE DON'T HAVE THE FACILITIES FOR A MAJOR SURGERY...
HELLO, POLICE HOSPITAL? I NEED TO PERFORM AN EMERGENCY OPERATION... YOU CAN'T?
THEIR FACILITIES ARE FULL...
LET ME TRY A FRIEND OF MINE...
YES, THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL HOSPITAL, PLEASE.
IT'S ME, SMITH.
IT NEVER OCCURRED TO ME THAT THE BACK OF THE PHOTO WAS POISONED.
YES. I SHOULD HAVE BEEN MORE CAREFUL, TOO.
WHAT ABOUT THAT DETECTIVE FROM THE LEXINGTON POLICE?


IT SHOULD BE EASY ENOUGH TO FIND OUT IF HE'S BONA FIDE...
BUT FIRST WE NEED TO SAVE THIS MAN...
CENTRAL HOSPITAL ...
HAS AN O.R. WAITING FOR US!
I'M SORRY THIS HAD TO HAPPEN DURING YOUR INSPECTION!
NEVER MIND. IT'S BEEN QUITE INFORMATIVE...
I'LL ACCOMPANY DR. CUNNINGHAM TO CENTRAL HOSPITAL.
BRMMMMM
HURRY! HIS PULSE IS FADING!

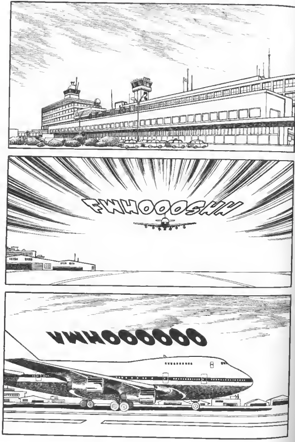

YOU WAIT HERE.
WE'LL GET THE PATIENT INTO THE O.R.
WARDEN? THIS IS CUNNINGHAM...
HOW'S KAZALL, DOCTOR?
WHAT'S THAT YOU SAY?
YOU SAID YOU WOULDN'T BE IN UNTIL EVENING, WARDEN,
SO I'M JUST GETTING READY TO LEAVE HOME...
I NEVER SAID ANY SUCH THING!
THEN... WHO...
WHO WAS THE DR. CUNNINGHAM WHO WAS HERE?
WARDEN, SOMETHING'S NOT RIGHT! THE HOSPITAL CALLED— KAZALL AND DR. CUNNINGHAM HAVE DISAPPEARED!
GOOD GOD!

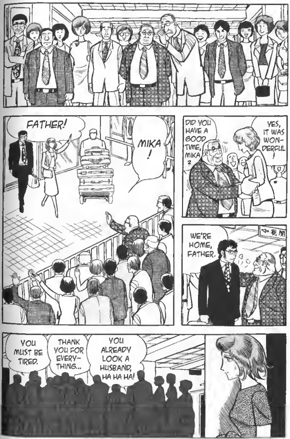

CENTRAL HOSPITAL!
WHAT?! YOU DON'T KNOW OF ANY DR. SMITH?
BUT WE SENT IN AN EMERGENCY PATIENT ON A STRETCHER...
YOU NEVER SAW HIM?
CALL THE POLICE!
WE'VE BEEN HAD!
WAHAHAHAHA
HAHAHAHA
THE PERFECT PRISON BREAK!
WAHAHAHAHA
THAT WAS BEAUTIFUL!
YOUR POISONED ACT WAS BRILLIANT!
YOUR DOCTOR ACT WASN'T BAD, EITHER!
AH, OUR SPONSOR HAS ARRIVED!
HOW WAS THAT? BROUGHT DOWN THE HOUSE?
WELL DONE. HERE'S YOUR $300,000 AS PROMISED.
MUCH OBLIGED!
WHERE'S KAZALL?

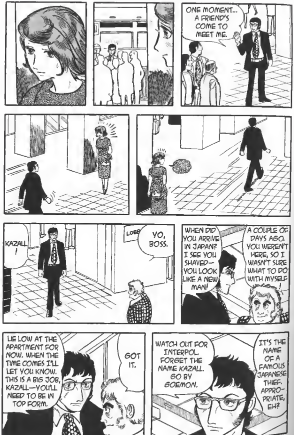

KAZALL?
HERE'S SOME MONEY AND A FAKE PASSPORT. YOU'LL HIGHTAIL IT DOWN TO MEXICO AND FLY FROM THERE TO JAPAN.
I HAVE A MAJOR JOB FOR YOU. IF YOU PULL IT OFF, YOU'LL MAKE $100,000.
WHAT'S THE JOB?
I WANT YOU TO INFILTRATE A BASE OF THE EAST ASIAN AIR FORCE
AND OPEN UP A CERTAIN STORAGE VAULT.
I'M ON MY HONEYMOON RIGHT NOW. SEE YOU IN JAPAN!
HOOOOOSH

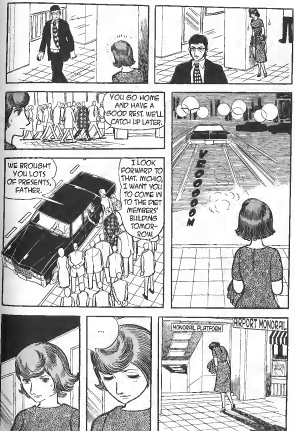
CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

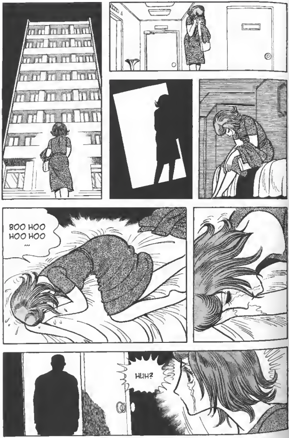
MASKED VISIT

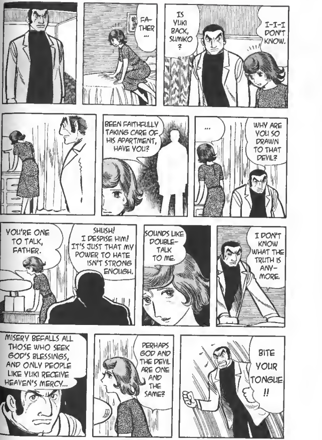

FWHOOOSHH
VWHOOOOOO

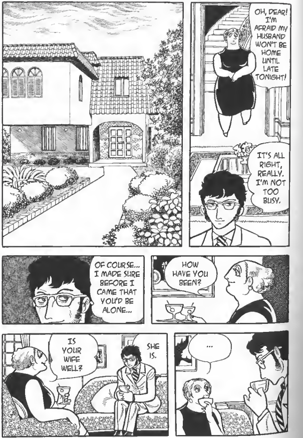

FATHER!
MIKA!
DID YOU HAVE A GOOD TIME, MIKA?
YES, IT WAS WONDERFUL!
WE'RE HOME, FATHER.
YOU MUST BE TIRED.
THANK YOU FOR EVERYTHING...
YOU ALREADY LOOK A HUSBAND, HA HA HA!

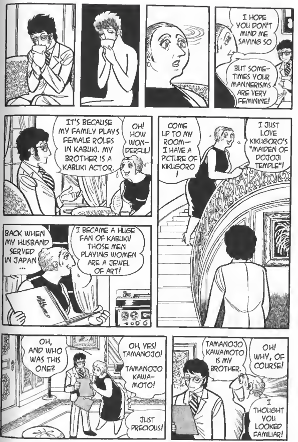

ONE MOMENT... A FRIEND'S COME TO MEET ME.
KAZALL!
LOBB
YO, BOSS.
WHEN DID YOU ARRIVE IN JAPAN? I SEE YOU SHAVED—YOU LOOK LIKE A NEW MAN!
A COUPLE OF DAYS AGO. YOU WEREN'T HERE, SO I WASN'T SURE WHAT TO DO WITH MYSELF!
LIE LOW AT THE APARTMENT FOR NOW. WHEN THE TIME COMES I'LL LET YOU KNOW. THIS IS A BIG JOB, KAZALL—YOU'LL NEED TO BE IN TOP FORM.
GOT IT.
WATCH OUT FOR INTERPOL. FORGET THE NAME KAZALL. GO BY GOEMON.
IT'S THE NAME OF A FAMOUS JAPANESE THIEF. APPROPRIATE, EH?

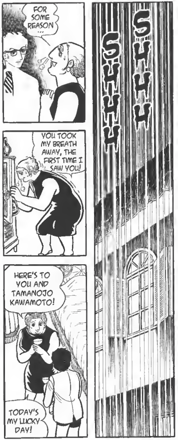

YOU GO HOME AND HAVE A GOOD REST. WE'LL CATCH UP LATER.
WE BROUGHT YOU LOTS OF PRESENTS, FATHER.
I LOOK FORWARD TO THAT. MICHIO, I WANT YOU TO COME IN TO THE DIET MEMBERS' BUILDING TOMORROW!
VROOOOOOM
...
MONORAIL PLATFORM
AIRPORT MONORAIL

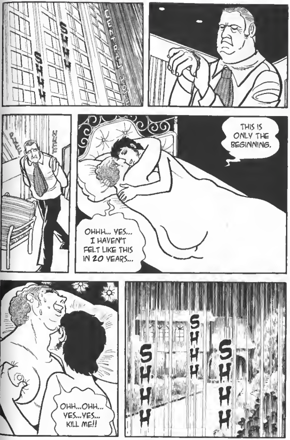

BOO HOO HOO HOO ...
HUH?

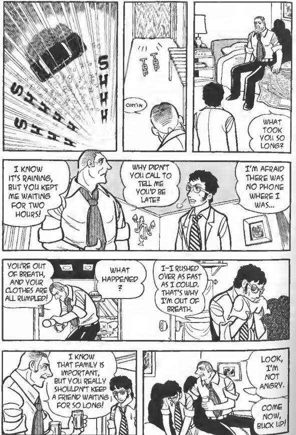

FATHER ...
IS YUKI BACK, SUMIKO?
I-I-I DON'T KNOW.
BEEN FAITHFULLY TAKING CARE OF HIS APARTMENT, HAVE YOU?
...
WHY ARE YOU SO DRAWN TO THAT DEVIL?
YOU'RE ONE TO TALK, FATHER.
SHUSH! I DESPISE HIM! IT'S JUST THAT MY POWER TO HATE ISN'T STRONG ENOUGH.
SOUNDS LIKE DOUBLE-TALK TO ME.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE TRUTH IS ANYMORE.
MISERY BEFALLS ALL THOSE WHO SEEK GOD'S BLESSINGS, AND ONLY PEOPLE LIKE YUKI RECEIVE HEAVEN'S MERCY...
PERHAPS GOD AND THE DEVIL ARE ONE AND THE SAME?
BITE YOUR TONGUE !!

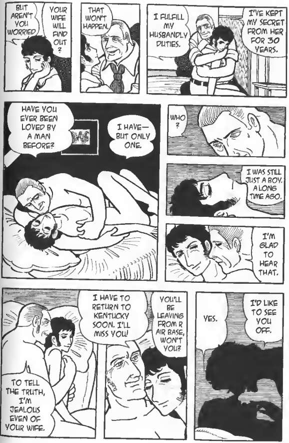

OH, DEAR! I'M AFRAID MY HUSBAND WON'T BE HOME UNTIL LATE TONIGHT!
IT'S ALL RIGHT, REALLY. I'M NOT TOO BUSY.
OF COURSE... I MADE SURE BEFORE I CAME THAT YOU'D BE ALONE...
HOW HAVE YOU BEEN?
IS YOUR WIFE WELL?
SHE IS.
...

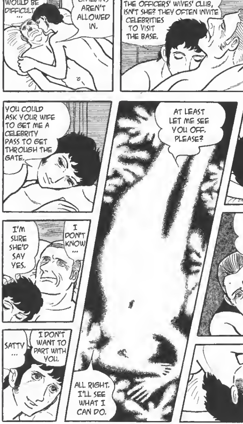

I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND ME SAYING SO
BUT SOME-TIMES YOUR MANNERISMS ARE VERY FEMININE!
IT'S BECAUSE MY FAMILY PLAYS FEMALE ROLES IN KABUKI. MY BROTHER IS A KABUKI ACTOR.
OH! HOW WON-DERFUL!
BACK WHEN MY HUSBAND SERVED IN JAPAN ...
I BECAME A HUGE FAN OF KABUKI! THOSE MEN PLAYING WOMEN ARE A JEWEL OF ART!
Album
COME UP TO MY ROOM— I HAVE A PICTURE OF KIKUGORO !
I JUST LOVE KIKUGORO'S "MAIDEN OF DOJOJI TEMPLE"!
OH, AND WHO WAS THIS ONE?
OH, YES! TAMANOJO!
TAMANOJO KAWA-MOTO!
JUST PRECIOUS!
TAMANOJO KAWAMOTO IS MY BROTHER.
OH! WHY, OF COURSE!
I THOUGHT YOU LOOKED FAMILIAR!

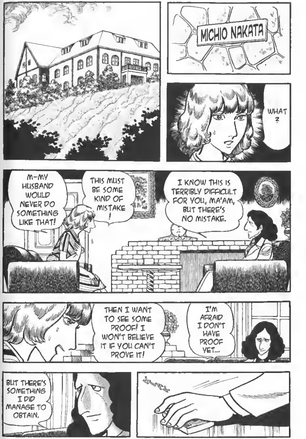

FOR SOME REASON ...
YOU TOOK MY BREATH AWAY, THE FIRST TIME I SAW YOU!
HERE'S TO YOU AND TAMANOJO KAWAMOTO!
TODAY'S MY LUCKY DAY!
SHHHH
SHHHH
WE MUSTN'T! IF MY HUSBAND FINDS OUT...
IT'S ALL RIGHT.
I'M DRAWN TO YOU...

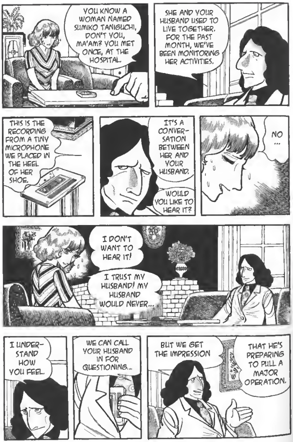

SHHH
SHHHH
CENTRAL HOTEL
PUFF
HUFF
THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING.
OHHH... YES... I HAVEN'T FELT LIKE THIS IN 20 YEARS...
OHH...OHH... YES...YES... KILL ME!!
SHHH
SHHH
SHHH

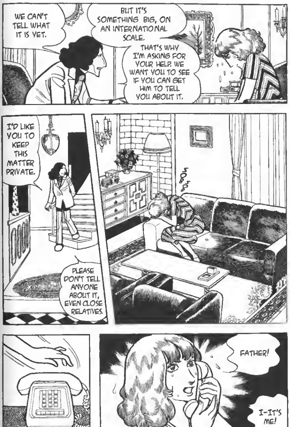

SHHHH
SHHHH
TAP
TAP
COM'IN
WHAT TOOK YOU SO LONG?
I KNOW IT'S RAINING, BUT YOU KEPT ME WAITING FOR TWO HOURS!
WHY DIDN'T YOU CALL TO TELL ME YOU'D BE LATE?
I'M AFRAID THERE WAS NO PHONE WHERE I WAS...
YOU'RE OUT OF BREATH, AND YOUR CLOTHES ARE ALL RUMPLED!
WHAT HAPPENED?
I–I RUSHED OVER AS FAST AS I COULD. THAT'S WHY I'M OUT OF BREATH.
I KNOW THAT FAMILY IS IMPORTANT, BUT YOU REALLY SHOULDN'T KEEP A FRIEND WAITING FOR SO LONG!
LOOK, I'M NOT ANGRY.
COME NOW, BUCK UP!

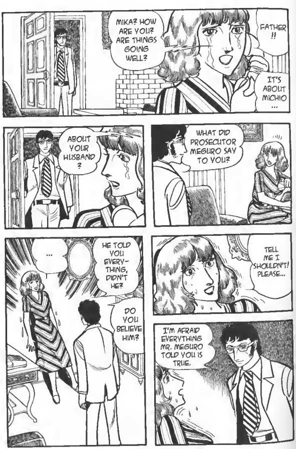

BUT AREN'T YOU WORRIED
YOUR WIFE WILL FIND OUT?
THAT WON'T HAPPEN.
I FULFILL MY HUSBANDLY DUTIES.
I'VE KEPT MY SECRET FROM HER FOR 30 YEARS.
HAVE YOU EVER BEEN LOVED BY A MAN BEFORE?
I HAVE— BUT ONLY ONE.
WHO?
I WAS STILL JUST A BOY. A LONG TIME AGO.
I'M GLAD TO HEAR THAT.
I HAVE TO RETURN TO KENTUCKY SOON. I'LL MISS YOU!
YOU'LL BE LEAVING FROM R AIR BASE, WON'T YOU?
TO TELL THE TRUTH, I'M JEALOUS EVEN OF YOUR WIFE.
YES.
I'D LIKE TO SEE YOU OFF.

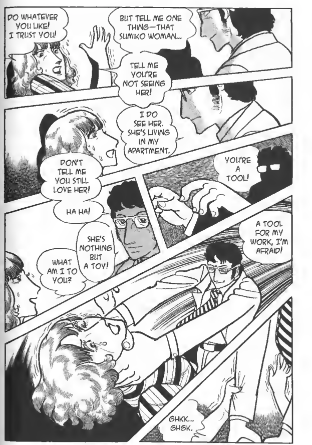

THAT WOULD BE DIFFICULT...
CIVILIANS AREN'T ALLOWED IN.
YOUR WIFE'S A MEMBER OF THE OFFICERS' WIVES' CLUB, ISN'T SHE? THEY OFTEN INVITE CELEBRITIES TO VISIT THE BASE.
TRUE.
YOU COULD ASK YOUR WIFE TO GET ME A CELEBRITY PASS TO GET THROUGH THE GATE.
AT LEAST LET ME SEE YOU OFF. PLEASE?
I'M SURE SHE'D SAY YES.
I DON'T KNOW...
YOU'RE ADORABLE.
SATTY...
I DON'T WANT TO PART WITH YOU.
ALL RIGHT. I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO.

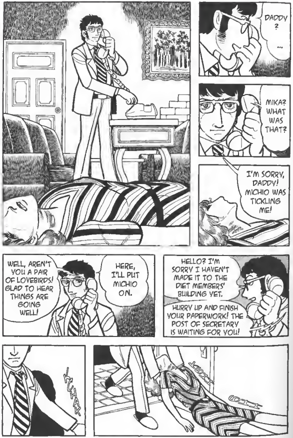

MICHIO NAKATA
WHAT?
M-MY HUSBAND WOULD NEVER DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT!
THIS MUST BE SOME KIND OF MISTAKE!
I KNOW THIS IS TERRIBLY DIFFICULT FOR YOU, MA'AM, BUT THERE'S NO MISTAKE.
THEN I WANT TO SEE SOME PROOF! I WON'T BELIEVE IT IF YOU CAN'T PROVE IT!
I'M AFRAID I DON'T HAVE PROOF YET...
BUT THERE'S SOMETHING I DID MANAGE TO OBTAIN.

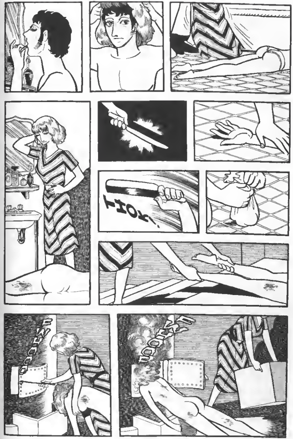

YOU KNOW A WOMAN NAMED SUMIKO TANIGUCHI, DON'T YOU, MA'AM? YOU MET ONCE, AT THE HOSPITAL.
SHE AND YOUR HUSBAND USED TO LIVE TOGETHER. FOR THE PAST MONTH, WE'VE BEEN MONITORING HER ACTIVITIES.
THIS IS THE RECORDING FROM A TINY MICROPHONE WE PLACED IN THE HEEL OF HER SHOE.
IT'S A CONVERSATION BETWEEN HER AND YOUR HUSBAND.
WOULD YOU LIKE TO HEAR IT?
NO ...
I DON'T WANT TO HEAR IT!
I TRUST MY HUSBAND! MY HUSBAND WOULD NEVER...
I UNDERSTAND HOW YOU FEEL.
WE CAN CALL YOUR HUSBAND IN FOR QUESTIONING...
BUT WE GET THE IMPRESSION
THAT HE'S PREPARING TO PULL A MAJOR OPERATION.

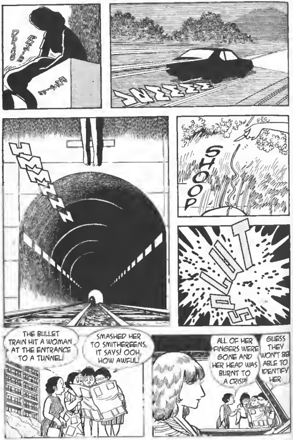

WE CAN'T TELL WHAT IT IS YET.
BUT IT'S SOMETHING BIG, ON AN INTERNATIONAL SCALE.
THAT'S WHY I'M ASKING FOR YOUR HELP. WE WANT YOU TO SEE IF YOU CAN GET HIM TO TELL YOU ABOUT IT.
I'D LIKE YOU TO KEEP THIS MATTER PRIVATE.
PLEASE DON'T TELL ANYONE ABOUT IT, EVEN CLOSE RELATIVES.
SOB SOB
FATHER!
I-IT'S ME!


MIKA? HOW ARE YOU? ARE THINGS GOING WELL?
FATHER!!
IT'S ABOUT MICHIO...
ABOUT YOUR HUSBAND?
WHAT DID PROSECUTOR MEGURO SAY TO YOU?
...
HE TOLD YOU EVERYTHING, DIDN'T HE?
DO YOU BELIEVE HIM?
TELL ME I SHOULDN'T! PLEASE...
I'M AFRAID EVERYTHING MR. MEGURO TOLD YOU IS TRUE.


DO WHATEVER YOU LIKE! I TRUST YOU!
BUT TELL ME ONE THING—THAT SUMIKO WOMAN...
TELL ME YOU'RE NOT SEEING HER!
I DO SEE HER. SHE'S LIVING IN MY APARTMENT.
DON'T TELL ME YOU STILL LOVE HER!
HA HA!
SHE'S NOTHING BUT A TOY!
WHAT AM I TO YOU?
YOU'RE A TOOL!
A TOOL FOR MY WORK, I'M AFRAID!
GHKK... GHGK.

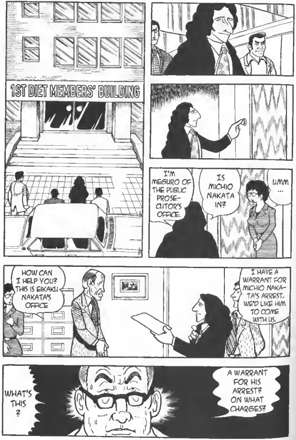

DADDY?
...
MIKA? WHAT WAS THAT?
I'M SORRY, DADDY! MICHIO WAS TICKLING ME!
WELL, AREN'T YOU A PAIR OF LOVEBIRDS! GLAD TO HEAR THINGS ARE GOING WELL!
HERE, I'LL PUT MICHIO ON.
HELLO? I'M SORRY I HAVEN'T MADE IT TO THE DIET MEMBERS' BUILDING YET.
HURRY UP AND FINISH YOUR PAPERWORK! THE POST OF SECRETARY IS WAITING FOR YOU!
K-CHAK

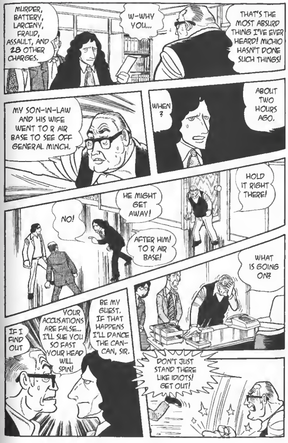

FWOOOO
FWOOOM

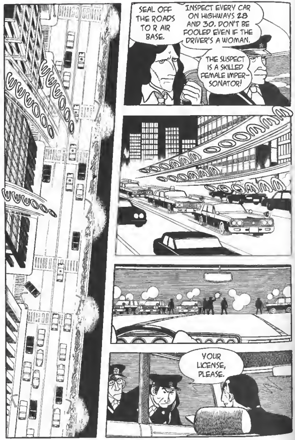

DRAG
RUSTLE
SHOOP
SPLUT
THE BULLET TRAIN HIT A WOMAN AT THE ENTRANCE TO A TUNNEL!
SMASHED HER TO SMITHEREENS. IT SAYS! OOH, HOW AWFUL!
ALL OF HER FINGERS WERE GONE AND HER HEAD WAS BURNT TO A CRISP!
GUESS THEY WON'T BE ABLE TO IDENTIFY HER.

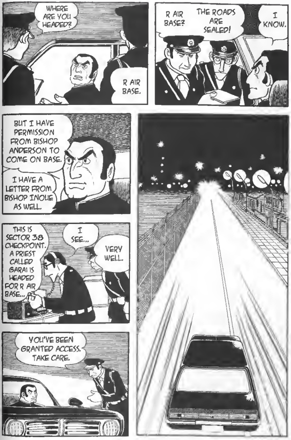
CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

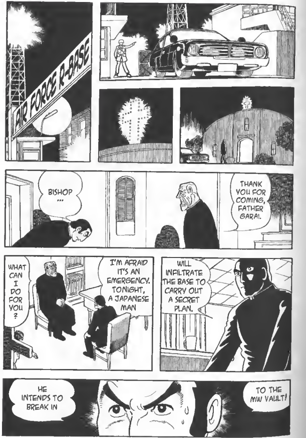
THE DEVIL COMES TO A AIR BASE

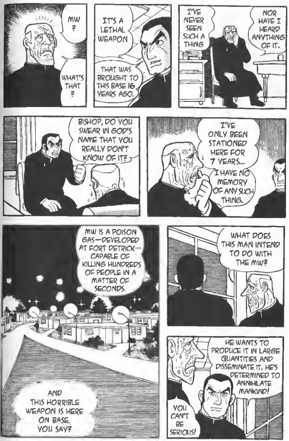

1ST DIET MEMBERS' BUILDING
I'M MEGURO OF THE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE.
IS MICHIO NAKATA IN?
UMM ...
HOW CAN I HELP YOU? THIS IS EIKAKU NAKATA'S OFFICE
I HAVE A WARRANT FOR MICHIO NAKATA'S ARREST. WE'D LIKE HIM TO COME WITH US.
WHAT'S THIS ?
A WARRANT FOR HIS ARREST? ON WHAT CHARGES?

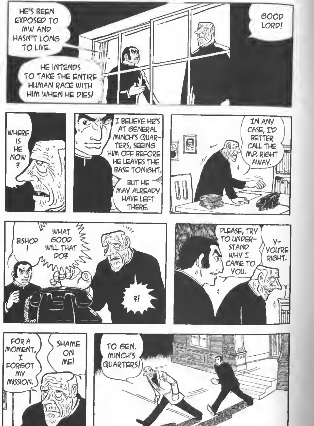

MURDER, BATTERY, LARCENY, FRAUD, ASSAULT, AND 28 OTHER CHARGES.
W-WHY YOU...
THAT'S THE MOST ABSURD THING I'VE EVER HEARD! MICHIO HASN'T DONE SUCH THINGS!
MY SON-IN-LAW AND HIS WIFE WENT TO R AIR BASE TO SEE OFF GENERAL MINCH.
WHEN ?
ABOUT TWO HOURS AGO.
NO!
HE MIGHT GET AWAY!
AFTER HIM! TO R AIR BASE!
HOLD IT RIGHT THERE!
WHAT IS GOING ON?
IF I FIND OUT
YOUR ACCUSATIONS ARE FALSE... I'LL SUE YOU SO FAST YOUR HEAD WILL SPIN!
BE MY GUEST. IF THAT HAPPENS I'LL DANCE THE CAN-CAN, SIR.
DON'T JUST STAND THERE LIKE IDIOTS! GET OUT!

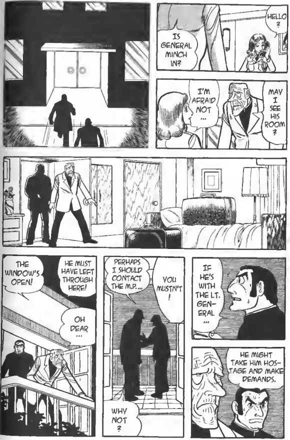

SEAL OFF THE ROADS TO R AIR BASE.
INSPECT EVERY CAR ON HIGHWAYS 28 AND 30. DON'T BE FOOLED EVEN IF THE DRIVER'S A WOMAN.
THE SUSPECT IS A SKILLED FEMALE IMPERSONATOR!
YOUR LICENSE, PLEASE.

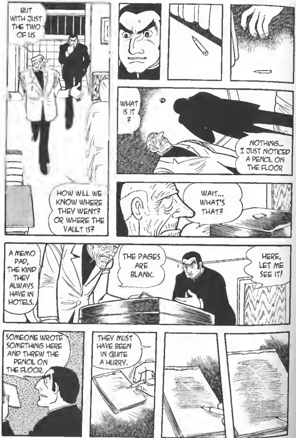

WHERE ARE YOU HEADED?
R AIR BASE.
R AIR BASE?
THE ROADS ARE SEALED!
I KNOW.
BUT I HAVE PERMISSION FROM BISHOP ANDERSON TO COME ON BASE.
I HAVE A LETTER FROM BISHOP INOUE AS WELL.
THIS IS SECTOR 38 CHECKPOINT. A PRIEST CALLED GARAI IS HEADED FOR R AIR BASE...
I SEE...
VERY WELL.
YOU'VE BEEN GRANTED ACCESS. TAKE CARE.

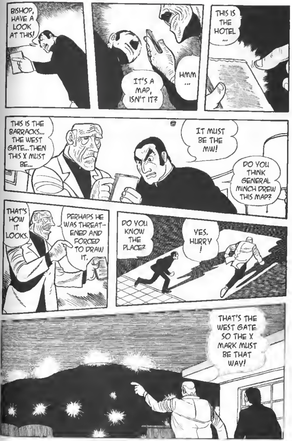

AIR FORCE R-BASE
BISHOP ...
THANK YOU FOR COMING, FATHER GARAI.
WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?
I'M AFRAID IT'S AN EMERGENCY. TONIGHT, A JAPANESE MAN
WILL INFILTRATE THE BASE TO CARRY OUT A SECRET PLAN.
HE INTENDS TO BREAK IN
TO THE MW VAULT!

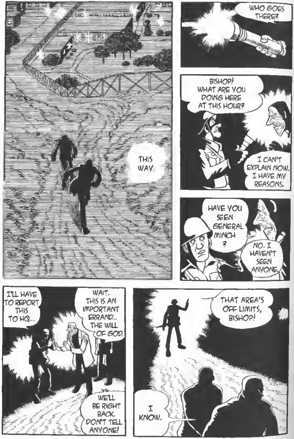

MW?
WHAT'S THAT?
IT'S A LETHAL WEAPON
THAT WAS BROUGHT TO THIS BASE 16 YEARS AGO.
I'VE NEVER SEEN SUCH A THING
NOR HAVE I HEARD ANYTHING OF IT.
BISHOP, DO YOU SWEAR IN GOD'S NAME THAT YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW OF IT?
I'VE ONLY BEEN STATIONED HERE FOR 7 YEARS...
I HAVE NO MEMORY OF ANY SUCH THING.
MW IS A POISON GAS—DEVELOPED AT FORT DETRICK—CAPABLE OF KILLING HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE IN A MATTER OF SECONDS.
AND THIS HORRIBLE WEAPON IS HERE ON BASE, YOU SAY?
WHAT DOES THIS MAN INTEND TO DO WITH THE MW?
HE WANTS TO PRODUCE IT IN LARGE QUANTITIES AND DISSEMINATE IT. HE'S DETERMINED TO ANNIHILATE MANKIND!
YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS!

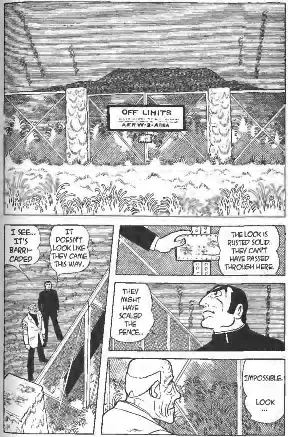

HE'S BEEN EXPOSED TO MW AND HASN'T LONG TO LIVE.
HE INTENDS TO TAKE THE ENTIRE HUMAN RACE WITH HIM WHEN HE DIES!
GOOD LORD!
WHERE IS HE NOW?
I BELIEVE HE'S AT GENERAL MINCH'S QUARTERS, SEEING HIM OFF BEFORE HE LEAVES THE BASE TONIGHT.
BUT HE MAY ALREADY HAVE LEFT THERE.
IN ANY CASE, I'D BETTER CALL THE M.P. RIGHT AWAY.
BISHOP!
WHAT GOOD WILL THAT DO?
?!
PLEASE, TRY TO UNDERSTAND WHY I CAME TO YOU.
Y-YOU'RE RIGHT.
FOR A MOMENT, I FORGOT MY MISSION.
SHAME ON ME!
TO GEN. MINCH'S QUARTERS!

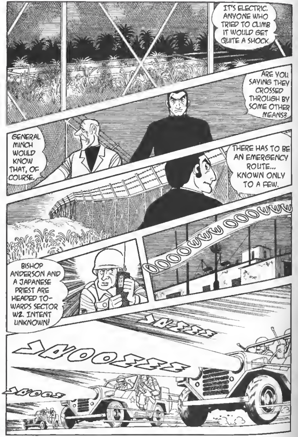

HELLO?
IS GENERAL MINCH IN?
I'M AFRAID NOT ...
MAY I SEE HIS ROOM?
THE WINDOW'S OPEN!
HE MUST HAVE LEFT THROUGH HERE!
OH DEAR ...
PERHAPS I SHOULD CONTACT THE M.P....
YOU MUSTN'T!
WHY NOT?
IF HE'S WITH THE LT. GENERAL ...
HE MIGHT TAKE HIM HOSTAGE AND MAKE DEMANDS.

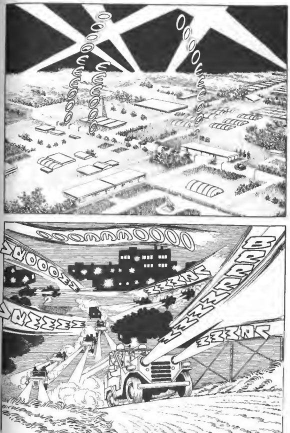

BUT WITH JUST THE TWO OF US
HOW WILL WE KNOW WHERE THEY WENT? OR WHERE THE VAULT IS?
WHAT IS IT?
NOTHING... I JUST NOTICED A PENCIL ON THE FLOOR
WAIT... WHAT'S THAT?
A MEMO PAD, THE KIND THEY ALWAYS HAVE IN HOTELS.
THE PAGES ARE BLANK.
HERE, LET ME SEE IT!
SOMEONE WROTE SOMETHING HERE AND THREW THE PENCIL ON THE FLOOR.
THEY MUST HAVE BEEN IN QUITE A HURRY.

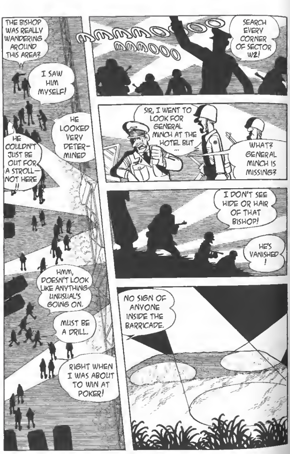

BISHOP, HAVE A LOOK AT THIS!
IT'S A MAP, ISN'T IT?
HMM...
THIS IS THE HOTEL...
THIS IS THE BARRACKS... THE WEST GATE...THEN THIS X MUST BE...
IT MUST BE THE MW!
DO YOU THINK GENERAL MINCH DREW THIS MAP?
THAT'S HOW IT LOOKS.
PERHAPS HE WAS THREATENED AND FORCED TO DRAW IT.
DO YOU KNOW THE PLACE?
YES. HURRY!
THAT'S THE WEST GATE SO THE X MARK MUST BE THAT WAY!

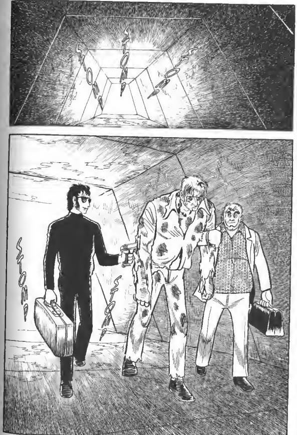

THIS WAY.
WHO GOES THERE?
BISHOP! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE AT THIS HOUR?
I CAN'T EXPLAIN NOW. I HAVE MY REASONS.
HAVE YOU SEEN GENERAL MINCH ?
NO. I HAVEN'T SEEN ANYONE.
I'LL HAVE TO REPORT THIS TO HQ...
WAIT. THIS IS AN IMPORTANT ERRAND... THE WILL OF GOD.
WE'LL BE RIGHT BACK. DON'T TELL ANYONE!
THAT AREA'S OFF LIMITS, BISHOP!
I KNOW.

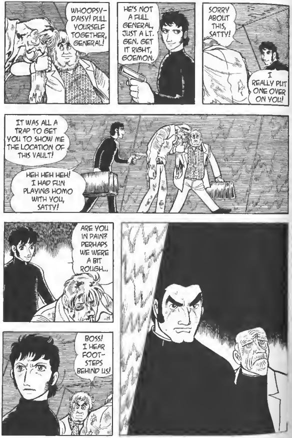

OFF LIMITS
AFR W-2-AREA
I SEE... IT'S BARRICADED
IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE THEY CAME THIS WAY.
THE LOCK IS RUSTED SOLID. THEY CAN'T HAVE PASSED THROUGH HERE.
THEY MIGHT HAVE SCALED THE FENCE...
IMPOSSIBLE.
LOOK ...

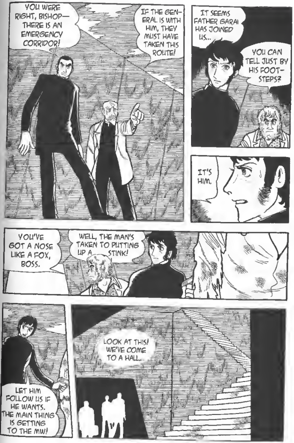

IT'S ELECTRIC. ANYONE WHO TRIED TO CLIMB IT WOULD GET QUITE A SHOCK.
ARE YOU SAYING THEY CROSSED THROUGH BY SOME OTHER MEANS?
GENERAL MINCH WOULD KNOW THAT, OF COURSE.
THERE HAS TO BE AN EMERGENCY ROUTE... KNOWN ONLY TO A FEW.
OOOOWWWOOOOWWW
BISHOP ANDERSON AND A JAPANESE PRIEST ARE HEADED TOWARDS SECTOR W2. INTENT UNKNOWN!

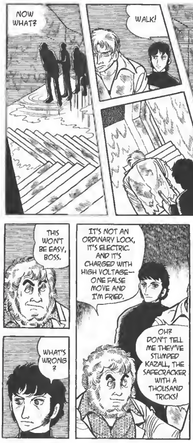


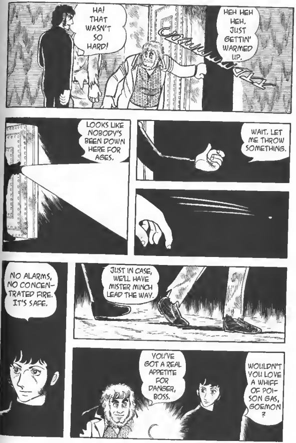

THE BISHOP WAS REALLY WANDERING AROUND THIS AREA?
I SAW HIM MYSELF!
HE LOOKED VERY DETERMINED
HE COULDN'T JUST BE OUT FOR A STROLL—NOT HERE!!
HMM, DOESN'T LOOK LIKE ANYTHING UNUSUAL'S GOING ON.
MUST BE A DRILL.
RIGHT WHEN I WAS ABOUT TO WIN AT POKER!
MMMMOOOOO
MMMOOO
SEARCH EVERY CORNER OF SECTOR W2!
SIR, I WENT TO LOOK FOR GENERAL MINCH AT THE HOTEL BUT ...
WHAT? GENERAL MINCH IS MISSING?
I DON'T SEE HIDE OR HAIR OF THAT BISHOP!
HE'S VANISHED!
NO SIGN OF ANYONE INSIDE THE BARRICADE.

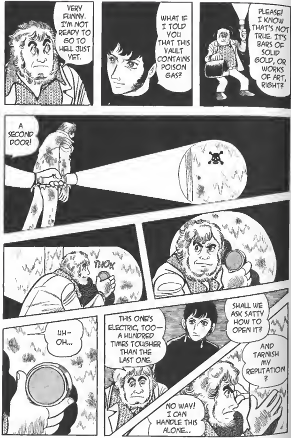

STOMP
STOMP
STOMP
STOMP
STOMP

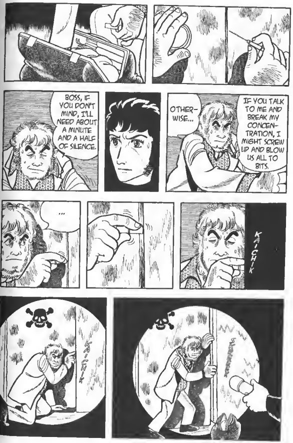

WHOOPSY-DAISY! PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER, GENERAL!
HE'S NOT A FULL GENERAL, JUST A LT. GEN. GET IT RIGHT, GOEMON.
SORRY ABOUT THIS, SATTY!
I REALLY PUT ONE OVER ON YOU!
IT WAS ALL A TRAP TO GET YOU TO SHOW ME THE LOCATION OF THIS VAULT!
HEH HEH HEH! I HAD FUN PLAYING HOMO WITH YOU, SATTY!
ARE YOU IN PAIN? PERHAPS WE WERE A BIT ROUGH...
BOSS! I HEAR FOOTSTEPS BEHIND US!

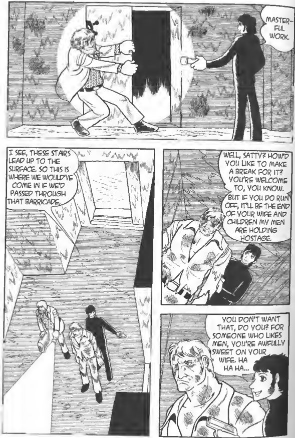

YOU WERE RIGHT, BISHOP—THERE IS AN EMERGENCY CORRIDOR!
IF THE GENERAL IS WITH HIM, THEY MUST HAVE TAKEN THIS ROUTE!
IT SEEMS FATHER GARAI HAS JOINED US...
YOU CAN TELL JUST BY HIS FOOTSTEPS?
IT'S HIM.
YOU'VE GOT A NOSE LIKE A FOX, BOSS.
WELL, THE MAN'S TAKEN TO PUTTING UP A STINK!
LET HIM FOLLOW US IF HE WANTS. THE MAIN THING IS GETTING TO THE MW!
LOOK AT THIS! WE'VE COME TO A HALL.

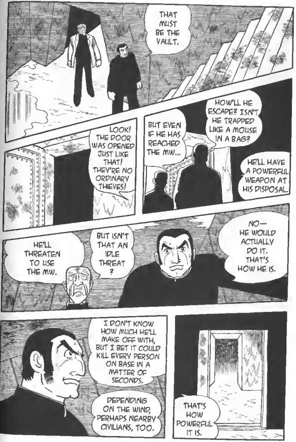

NOW WHAT?
WALK!
ALL RIGHT, GOEMON, TIME TO DO YOUR THING.
YESSIR! I WAS STARTING TO GET TIRED OF WALKING THROUGH ALL THESE TUNNELS.
THIS WON'T BE EASY, BOSS.
IT'S NOT AN ORDINARY LOCK, IT'S ELECTRIC. AND IT'S CHARGED WITH HIGH VOLTAGE— ONE FALSE MOVE AND I'M FRIED.
HEH HEH, WATCH WHAT YOU SAY, BOSS.
WHAT'S WRONG?
OH? DON'T TELL ME THEY'VE STUMPED KAZALL, THE SAFECRACKER WITH A THOUSAND TRICKS!

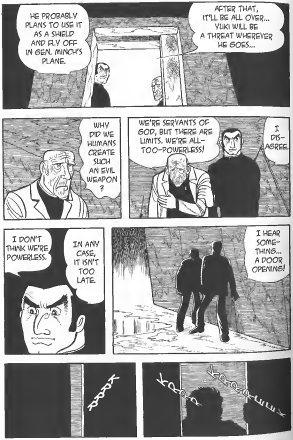

HA! THAT WASN'T SO HARD!
HEH HEH HEH. JUST GETTIN' WARMED UP.
LOOKS LIKE NOBODY'S BEEN DOWN HERE FOR AGES.
WAIT. LET ME THROW SOMETHING.
NO ALARMS, NO CONCENTRATED FIRE. IT'S SAFE.
JUST IN CASE, WE'LL HAVE MISTER MINCH LEAD THE WAY.
YOU'VE GOT A REAL APPETITE FOR DANGER, BOSS.
WOULDN'T YOU LOVE A WHIFF OF POISON GAS, GOEMON?

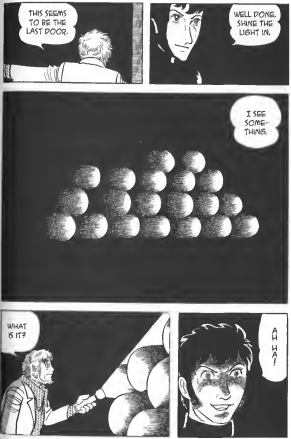

VERY FUNNY. I'M NOT READY TO GO TO HELL JUST YET.
WHAT IF I TOLD YOU THAT THIS VAULT CONTAINS POISON GAS?
PLEASE! I KNOW THAT'S NOT TRUE. IT'S BARS OF SOLID GOLD, OR WORKS OF ART, RIGHT?
A SECOND DOOR!
THOK
UH-OH...
THIS ONE'S ELECTRIC, TOO— A HUNDRED TIMES TOUGHER THAN THE LAST ONE.
SHALL WE ASK SATTY HOW TO OPEN IT?
AND TARNISH MY REPUTATION?
NO WAY! I CAN HANDLE THIS ALONE...

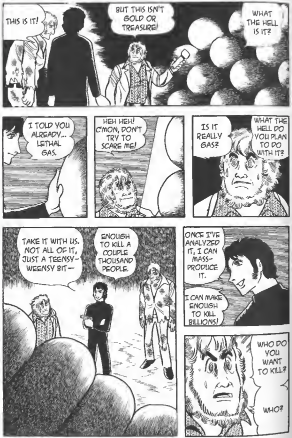

BOSS, IF YOU DON'T MIND, I'LL NEED ABOUT A MINUTE AND A HALF OF SILENCE.
OTHERWISE...
IF YOU TALK TO ME AND BREAK MY CONCENTRATION, I MIGHT SCREW UP AND BLOW US ALL TO BITS.
...
KAICHIK
KAICHIK

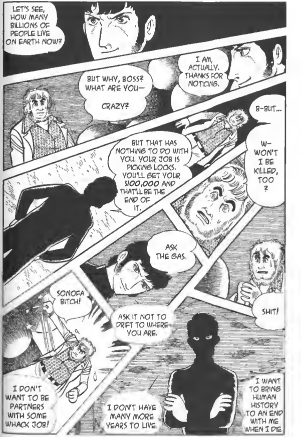

MASTER-FUL WORK.
I SEE, THESE STAIRS LEAD UP TO THE SURFACE. SO THIS IS WHERE WE WOULD'VE COME IN IF WE'D PASSED THROUGH THAT BARRICADE.
WELL, SATTY? HOW'D YOU LIKE TO MAKE A BREAK FOR IT? YOU'RE WELCOME TO, YOU KNOW. BUT IF YOU DO RUN OFF, IT'LL BE THE END OF YOUR WIFE AND CHILDREN MY MEN ARE HOLDING HOSTAGE.
YOU DON'T WANT THAT, DO YOU? FOR SOMEONE WHO LIKES MEN, YOU'RE AWFULLY SWEET ON YOUR WIFE. HA HA HA...

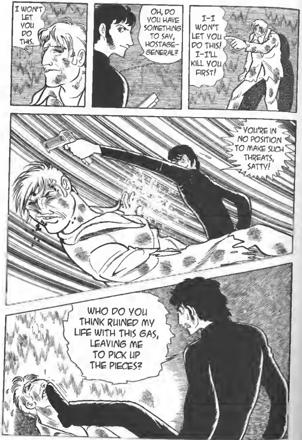

THAT MUST BE THE VAULT.
LOOK! THE DOOR WAS OPENED JUST LIKE THAT! THEY'RE NO ORDINARY THIEVES!
BUT EVEN IF HE HAS REACHED THE MW...
HOW'LL HE ESCAPE? ISN'T HE TRAPPED LIKE A MOUSE IN A BAG?
HE'LL HAVE A POWERFUL WEAPON AT HIS DISPOSAL.
HE'LL THREATEN TO USE THE MW.
BUT ISN'T THAT AN IDLE THREAT?
NO— HE WOULD ACTUALLY DO IT. THAT'S HOW HE IS.
I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH HE'LL MAKE OFF WITH, BUT I BET IT COULD KILL EVERY PERSON ON BASE IN A MATTER OF SECONDS.
DEPENDING ON THE WIND, PERHAPS NEARBY CIVILIANS, TOO.
THAT'S HOW POWERFUL IT IS.

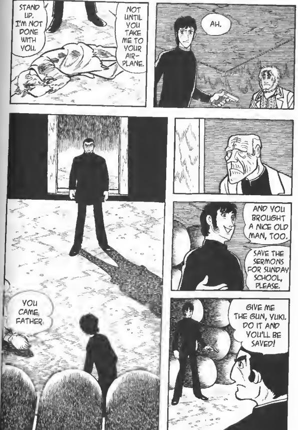

HE PROBABLY PLANS TO USE IT AS A SHIELD AND FLY OFF IN GEN. MINCH'S PLANE.
AFTER THAT, IT'LL BE ALL OVER... YUKI WILL BE A THREAT WHEREVER HE GOES...
WHY DID WE HUMANS CREATE SUCH AN EVIL WEAPON?
WE'RE SERVANTS OF GOD, BUT THERE ARE LIMITS. WE'RE ALL-TOO-POWERLESS!
I DISAGREE.
I DON'T THINK WE'RE POWERLESS.
IN ANY CASE, IT ISN'T TOO LATE.
I HEAR SOMETHING... A DOOR OPENING!
RRRK
KRRRR
KRRRRUUUX

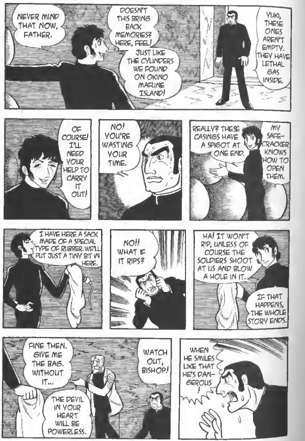

THIS SEEMS TO BE THE LAST DOOR.
WELL DONE. SHINE THE LIGHT IN.
I SEE SOMETHING.
WHAT IS IT?
AH HA!

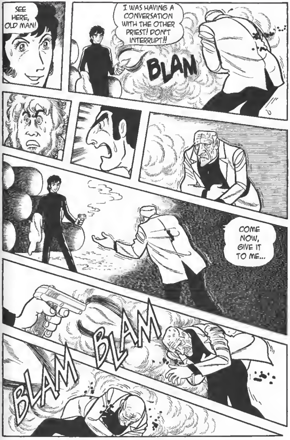

THIS IS IT!
BUT THIS ISN'T GOLD OR TREASURE!
WHAT THE HELL IS IT?
I TOLD YOU ALREADY... LETHAL GAS.
HEH HEH! C'MON, DON'T TRY TO SCARE ME!
IS IT REALLY GAS?
WHAT THE HELL DO YOU PLAN TO DO WITH IT?
TAKE IT WITH US. NOT ALL OF IT, JUST A TEENSY-WEENSY BIT—
ENOUGH TO KILL A COUPLE THOUSAND PEOPLE.
ONCE I'VE ANALYZED IT, I CAN MASS-PRODUCE IT.
I CAN MAKE ENOUGH TO KILL BILLIONS!
WHO DO YOU WANT TO KILL?
WHO?

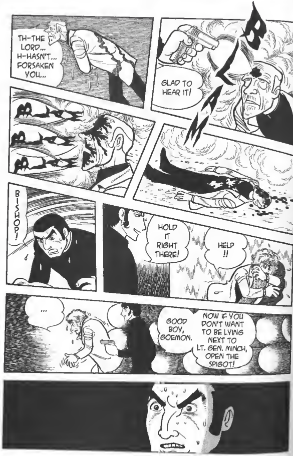

LET'S SEE, HOW MANY BILLIONS OF PEOPLE LIVE ON EARTH NOW?
BUT WHY, BOSS? WHAT ARE YOU—
CRAZY?
I AM, ACTUALLY. THANKS FOR NOTICING.
B-BUT...
W-WON'T I BE KILLED, TOO?
BUT THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU. YOUR JOB IS PICKING LOCKS. YOU'LL GET YOUR $100,000 AND THAT'LL BE THE END OF IT.
ASK THE GAS.
SHIT!
SONOFA BITCH!
ASK IT NOT TO DRIFT TO WHERE YOU ARE.
I DON'T WANT TO BE PARTNERS WITH SOME WHACK JOB!
I DON'T HAVE MANY MORE YEARS TO LIVE.
I WANT TO BRING HUMAN HISTORY TO AN END WITH ME WHEN I DIE


I WON'T LET YOU DO THIS.
OH, DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY, HOSTAGE-GENERAL?
I-I WON'T LET YOU DO THIS! I-I'LL KILL YOU FIRST!
YOU'RE IN NO POSITION TO MAKE SUCH THREATS, SATTY!
WHO DO YOU THINK RUINED MY LIFE WITH THIS GAS, LEAVING ME TO PICK UP THE PIECES?


STAND UP. I'M NOT DONE WITH YOU.
NOT UNTIL YOU TAKE ME TO YOUR AIR-PLANE.
AH.
YOU CAME, FATHER.
AND YOU BROUGHT A NICE OLD MAN, TOO.
SAVE THE SERMONS FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL, PLEASE.
GIVE ME THE GUN, YUKI. DO IT AND YOU'LL BE SAVED!

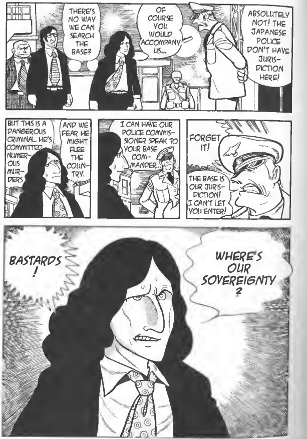

NEVER MIND THAT NOW, FATHER.
DOESN'T THIS BRING BACK MEMORIES? HERE, FEEL!
JUST LIKE THE CYLINDERS WE FOUND ON OKINO MAFUNE ISLAND!
YUKI, THESE ONES AREN'T EMPTY. THEY HAVE LETHAL GAS INSIDE.
OF COURSE! I'LL NEED YOUR HELP TO CARRY IT OUT!
NO! YOU'RE WASTING YOUR TIME.
REALLY? THESE CASINGS HAVE A SPIGOT AT ONE END.
MY SAFE-CRACKER KNOWS HOW TO OPEN THEM.
I HAVE HERE A SACK MADE OF A SPECIAL TYPE OF RUBBER. WE'LL PUT JUST A TINY BIT IN HERE.
NO!! WHAT IF IT RIPS?
HA! IT WON'T RIP, UNLESS OF COURSE THE SOLDIERS SHOOT AT US AND BLOW A HOLE IN IT.
IF THAT HAPPENS, THE WHOLE STORY ENDS.
FINE THEN. GIVE ME THE BAG. WITHOUT IT...
THE DEVIL IN YOUR HEART WILL BE POWERLESS.
WATCH OUT, BISHOP!
WHEN HE SMILES LIKE THAT HE'S DANGEROUS!

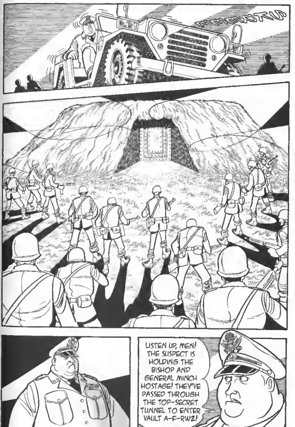

SEE HERE, OLD MAN!
I WAS HAVING A CONVERSATION WITH THE OTHER PRIEST! DON'T INTERRUPT!!
BLAN
COME NOW, GIVE IT TO ME...
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM

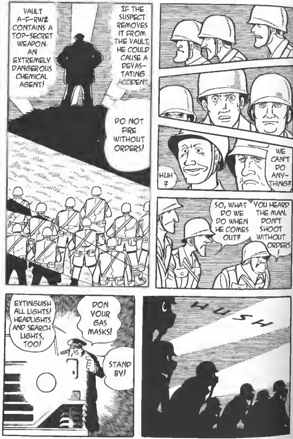

TH-THE LORD... H-HASN'T... FORSAKEN YOU...
GLAD TO HEAR IT!
BLAM
BISHOP!
HOLD IT RIGHT THERE!
HELP !!
...
GOOD BOY, GOEMON.
NOW IF YOU DON'T WANT TO BE LYING NEXT TO LT. GEN. MINCH, OPEN THE SPIGOT!

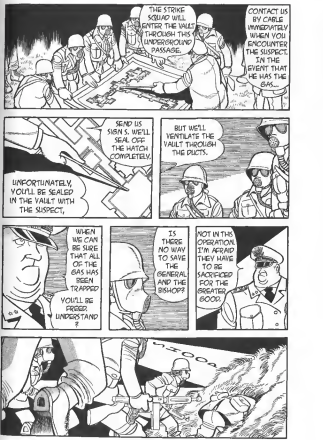
CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

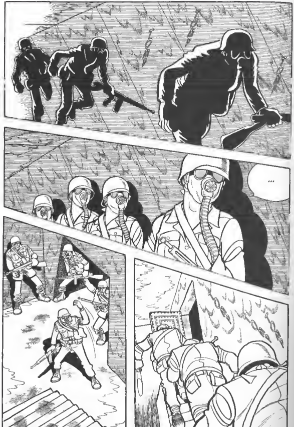
HOSTAGE

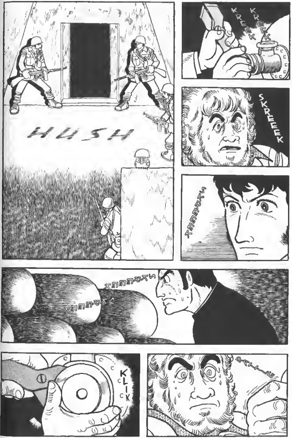

THERE'S NO WAY WE CAN SEARCH THE BASE?
OF COURSE YOU WOULD ACCOMPANY US...
ABSOLUTELY NOT! THE JAPANESE POLICE DON'T HAVE JURISDICTION HERE!
BUT THIS IS A DANGEROUS CRIMINAL. HE'S COMMITTED NUMEROUS MURDERS
AND WE FEAR HE MIGHT FLEE THE COUNTRY.
I CAN HAVE OUR POLICE COMMISSIONER SPEAK TO YOUR BASE COMMANDER...
FORGET IT!
THE BASE IS OUR JURISDICTION! I CAN'T LET YOU ENTER!
BASTARDS!
WHERE'S OUR SOVEREIGNTY?

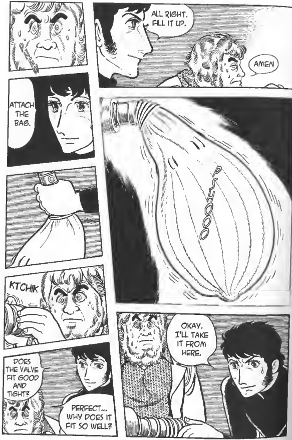

VROOOOM
LISTEN UP, MEN! THE SUSPECT IS HOLDING THE BISHOP AND GENERAL MINCH HOSTAGE! THEY'VE PASSED THROUGH THE TOP-SECRET TUNNEL TO ENTER VAULT A-F-RW2!

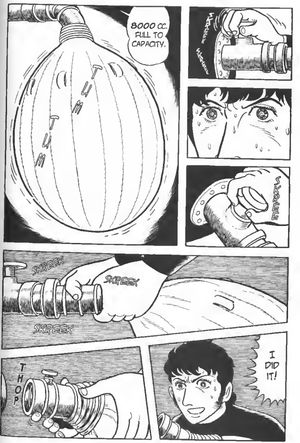

VAULT A-F-RW2 CONTAINS A TOP-SECRET WEAPON, AN EXTREMELY DANGEROUS CHEMICAL AGENT!
IF THE SUSPECT REMOVES IT FROM THE VAULT, HE COULD CAUSE A DEVASTATING ACCIDENT.
DO NOT FIRE WITHOUT ORDERS!
HUH?
WE CAN'T DO ANYTHING?
SO, WHAT DO WE DO WHEN HE COMES OUT?
YOU HEARD THE MAN. DON'T SHOOT WITHOUT ORDERS!
EXTINGUISH ALL LIGHTS! HEADLIGHTS AND SEARCH LIGHTS, TOO!
DON YOUR GAS MASKS!
STAND BY!
HUSH

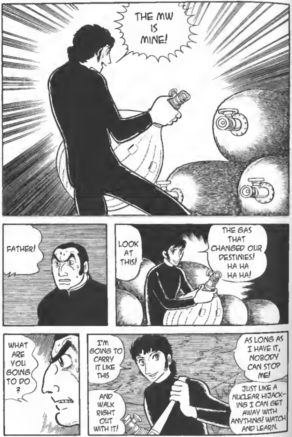

THE STRIKE SQUAD WILL ENTER THE VAULT THROUGH THIS UNDERGROUND PASSAGE.
CONTACT US BY CABLE IMMEDIATELY WHEN YOU ENCOUNTER THE SUSPECT. IN THE EVENT THAT HE HAS THE GAS...
SEND US SIGNS, WE'LL SEAL OFF THE HATCH COMPLETELY.
UNFORTUNATELY, YOU'LL BE SEALED IN THE VAULT WITH THE SUSPECT,
BUT WE'LL VENTILATE THE VAULT THROUGH THE DUCTS.
WHEN WE CAN BE SURE THAT ALL OF THE GAS HAS BEEN TRAPPED YOU'LL BE FREED. UNDERSTAND?
IS THERE NO WAY TO SAVE THE GENERAL AND THE BISHOP?
NOT IN THIS OPERATION. I'M AFRAID THEY HAVE TO BE SACRIFICED FOR THE GREATER GOOD.

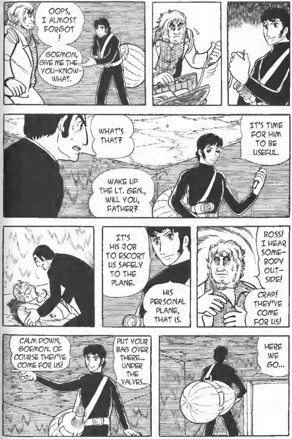

...

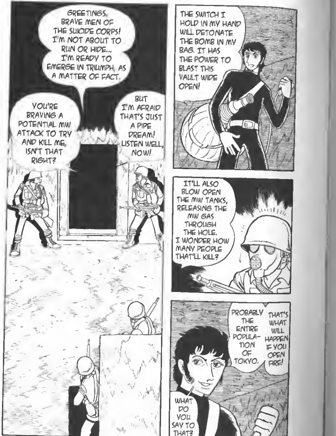

HUSH
KREEEK KREEEK
SKREEEK
SKREEEK
SKREEEK
SKREEEK
KLICK

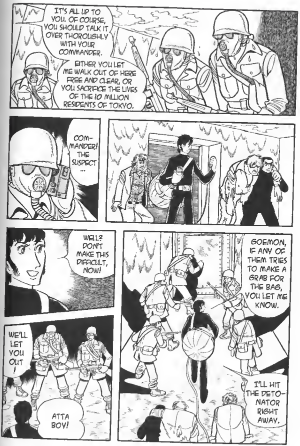

PHEW
ALL RIGHT. FILL IT UP.
AMEN
ATTACH THE BAG.
PSHOOO
KTCHIK
DOES THE VALVE FIT GOOD AND TIGHT?
PERFECT... WHY DOES IT FIT SO WELL?
OKAY. I'LL TAKE IT FROM HERE.

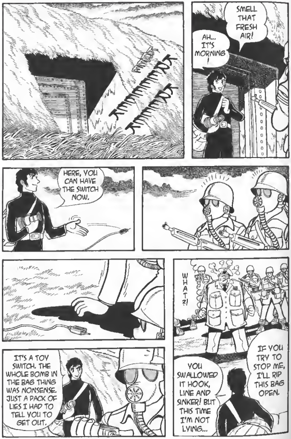

8000 CC. FULL TO CAPACITY.
TUM
TUM
SKREEK
SKREEK
SKREEK
SKREEK
SKREEK
SKREEK
THOP
I DID IT!

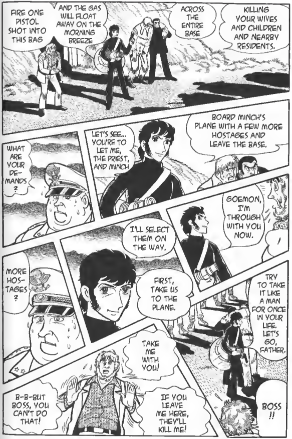

THE MW IS MINE!
FATHER!
LOOK AT THIS!
THE GAS THAT CHANGED OUR DESTINIES! HA HA HA HA!
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?
I'M GOING TO CARRY IT LIKE THIS
AND WALK RIGHT OUT WITH IT!
AS LONG AS I HAVE IT, NOBODY CAN STOP ME!
JUST LIKE A NUCLEAR HIJACKING I CAN GET AWAY WITH ANYTHING! WATCH AND LEARN.

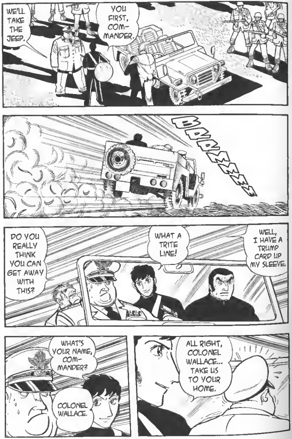

OOPS, I ALMOST FORGOT!
GOEMON, GIVE ME THE YOU-KNOW-WHAT.
WHAT'S THAT?
IT'S TIME FOR HIM TO BE USEFUL.
WAKE UP THE LT. GEN., WILL YOU, FATHER?
IT'S HIS JOB TO ESCORT US SAFELY TO THE PLANE.
HIS PERSONAL PLANE, THAT IS.
BOSS! I HEAR SOMEBODY OUTSIDE!
CRAP! THEY'VE COME FOR US!
CALM DOWN, GOEMON. OF COURSE THEY'VE COME FOR US!
PUT YOUR BAG OVER THERE... UNDER THE VALVES...
HERE WE GO...

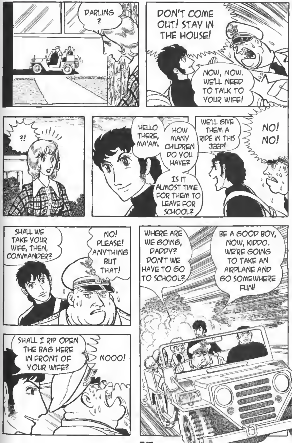

GREETINGS, BRAVE MEN OF THE SUICIDE CORPS! I'M NOT ABOUT TO RUN OR HIDE... I'M READY TO EMERGE IN TRIUMPH, AS A MATTER OF FACT.
YOU'RE BRAVING A POTENTIAL MW ATTACK TO TRY AND KILL ME, ISN'T THAT RIGHT?
BUT I'M AFRAID THAT'S JUST A PIPE DREAM! LISTEN WELL, NOW!
THE SWITCH I HOLD IN MY HAND WILL DETONATE THE BOMB IN MY BAG. IT HAS THE POWER TO BLAST THIS VAULT WIDE OPEN!
IT'LL ALSO BLOW OPEN THE MW TANKS, RELEASING THE MW GAS THROUGH THE HOLE. I WONDER HOW MANY PEOPLE THAT'LL KILL?
PROBABLY THE ENTIRE POPULATION OF TOKYO.
THAT'S WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF YOU OPEN FIRE!
WHAT DO YOU SAY TO THAT?


IT'S ALL UP TO YOU. OF COURSE, YOU SHOULD TALK IT OVER THOROUGHLY WITH YOUR COMMANDER.
EITHER YOU LET ME WALK OUT OF HERE FREE AND CLEAR, OR YOU SACRIFICE THE LIVES OF THE 10 MILLION RESIDENTS OF TOKYO.
COMMANDER! THE SUSPECT ...
WELL? DON'T MAKE THIS DIFFICULT, NOW!
WE'LL LET YOU OUT!
ATTA BOY!
GOEMON, IF ANY OF THEM TRIES TO MAKE A GRAB FOR THE BAG, YOU LET ME KNOW.
I'LL HIT THE DETONATOR RIGHT AWAY.


KREEEEEEK
KREEEEK
AH... IT'S MORNING!
SMELL THAT FRESH AIR!
HERE, YOU CAN HAVE THE SWITCH NOW.
WHAT?!
IT'S A TOY SWITCH. THE WHOLE BOMB IN THE BAG THING WAS NONSENSE. JUST A PACK OF LIES I HAD TO TELL YOU TO GET OUT.
YOU SWALLOWED IT HOOK, LINE AND SINKER! BUT THIS TIME I'M NOT LYING...
IF YOU TRY TO STOP ME, I'LL RIP THIS BAG OPEN.

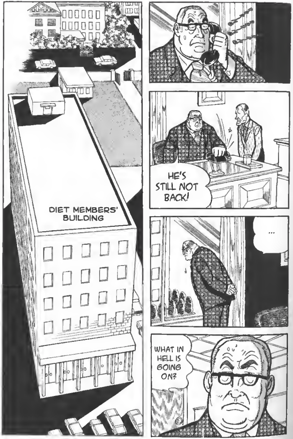

FIRE ONE PISTOL SHOT INTO THIS BAG
AND THE GAS WILL FLOAT AWAY ON THE MORNING BREEZE
ACROSS THE ENTIRE BASE
KILLING YOUR WIVES AND CHILDREN AND NEARBY RESIDENTS.
WHAT ARE YOUR DEMANDS?
LET'S SEE... YOU'RE TO LET ME, THE PRIEST, AND MINCH
BOARD MINCH'S PLANE WITH A FEW MORE HOSTAGES AND LEAVE THE BASE.
MORE HOSTAGES?
I'LL SELECT THEM ON THE WAY.
FIRST, TAKE US TO THE PLANE.
GOEMON, I'M THROUGH WITH YOU NOW.
!
TAKE ME WITH YOU!
B-B-BUT BOSS, YOU CAN'T DO THAT!
IF YOU LEAVE ME HERE, THEY'LL KILL ME!
TRY TO TAKE IT LIKE A MAN FOR ONCE IN YOUR LIFE. LET'S GO, FATHER.
BOSS!!

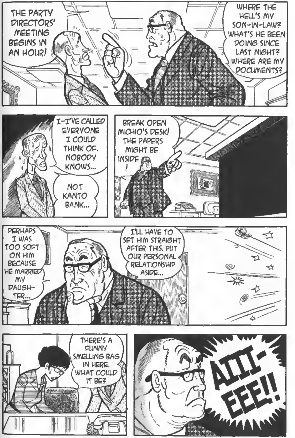

WE'LL TAKE THE JEEP.
YOU FIRST, COMMANDER.
BRRRMMMM
DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN GET AWAY WITH THIS?
WHAT A TRITE LINE!
WELL, I HAVE A TRUMP CARD UP MY SLEEVE.
WHAT'S YOUR NAME, COMMANDER?
COLONEL WALLACE.
ALL RIGHT, COLONEL WALLACE... TAKE US TO YOUR HOME.

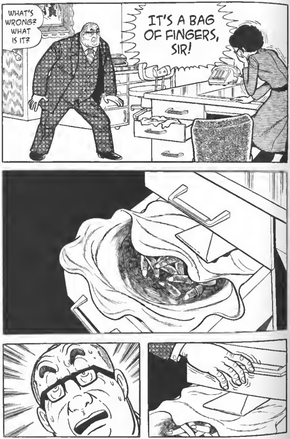

DARLING?
DON'T COME OUT! STAY IN THE HOUSE!
NOW, NOW. WE'LL NEED TO TALK TO YOUR WIFE!
?!
HELLO THERE, MA'AM.
HOW MANY CHILDREN DO YOU HAVE?
IS IT ALMOST TIME FOR THEM TO LEAVE FOR SCHOOL?
WE'LL GIVE THEM A RIDE IN THIS JEEP!
NO! NO!
SHALL WE TAKE YOUR WIFE, THEN, COMMANDER?
NO! PLEASE! ANYTHING BUT THAT!
SHALL I RIP OPEN THE BAG HERE IN FRONT OF YOUR WIFE?
NOOO!
WHERE ARE WE GOING, DADDY? DON'T WE HAVE TO GO TO SCHOOL?
BE A GOOD BOY, NOW, KIDDO. WE'RE GOING TO TAKE AN AIRPLANE AND GO SOMEWHERE FUN!

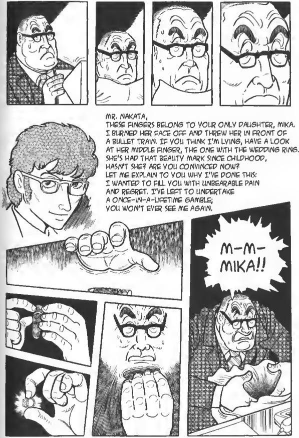
CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

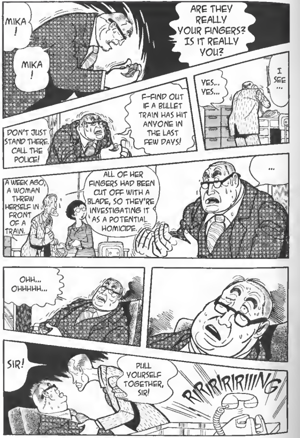
DEPARTURE TO DESTRUCTION

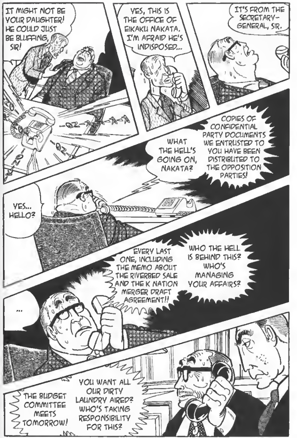

DIET MEMBERS' BUILDING
HE'S STILL NOT BACK!
...
WHAT IN HELL IS GOING ON?

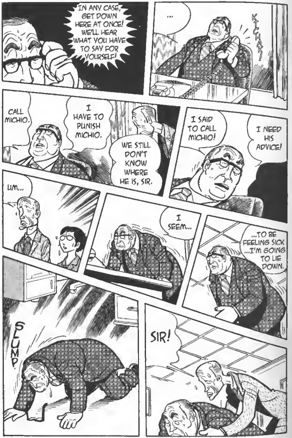

THE PARTY DIRECTORS' MEETING BEGINS IN AN HOUR!
WHERE THE HELL'S MY SON-IN-LAW? WHAT'S HE BEEN DOING SINCE LAST NIGHT? WHERE ARE MY DOCUMENTS?
I-I'VE CALLED EVERYONE I COULD THINK OF. NOBODY KNOWS...
NOT KANTO BANK...
BREAK OPEN MICHIO'S DESK! THE PAPERS MIGHT BE INSIDE!
PERHAPS I WAS TOO SOFT ON HIM BECAUSE HE MARRIED MY DAUGHTER...
I'LL HAVE TO SET HIM STRAIGHT AFTER THIS. PUT OUR PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP ASIDE...
THERE'S A FUNNY SMELLING BAG IN HERE. WHAT COULD IT BE?
AIII-EEE!!

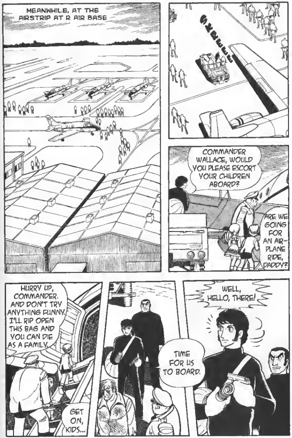

WHAT'S WRONG? WHAT IS IT?
IT'S A BAG OF FINGERS, SIR!

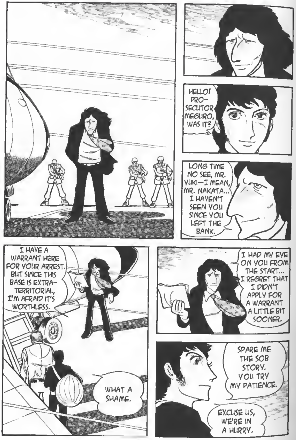

MR. NAKATA,
THESE FINGERS BELONG TO YOUR ONLY DAUGHTER, MIKA.
I BURNED HER FACE OFF AND THREW HER IN FRONT OF
A BULLET TRAIN. IF YOU THINK I'M LYING, HAVE A LOOK
AT HER MIDDLE FINGER, THE ONE WITH THE WEDDING RING.
SHE'S HAD THAT BEAUTY MARK SINCE CHILDHOOD,
HASN'T SHE? ARE YOU CONVINCED NOW?
LET ME EXPLAIN TO YOU WHY I'VE DONE THIS:
I WANTED TO FILL YOU WITH UNBEARABLE PAIN
AND REGRET. I'VE LEFT TO UNDERTAKE
A ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME GAMBLE;
YOU WON'T EVER SEE ME AGAIN.
M-M-MIKA!!

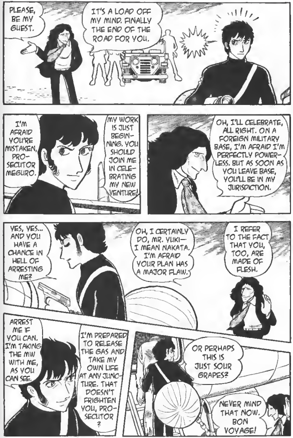

MIKA !
MIKA !
ARE THEY REALLY YOUR FINGERS? IS IT REALLY YOU?
DON'T JUST STAND THERE. CALL THE POLICE!
F-FIND OUT IF A BULLET TRAIN HAS HIT ANYONE IN THE LAST FEW DAYS!
YES... YES...
I SEE ...
A WEEK AGO, A WOMAN THREW HERSELF IN FRONT OF A TRAIN.
ALL OF HER FINGERS HAD BEEN CUT OFF WITH A BLADE, SO THEY'RE INVESTIGATING IT AS A POTENTIAL HOMICIDE.
...
OHH... OHHHHH...
SIR!
PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER, SIR!
RIRIRIRIRIIING

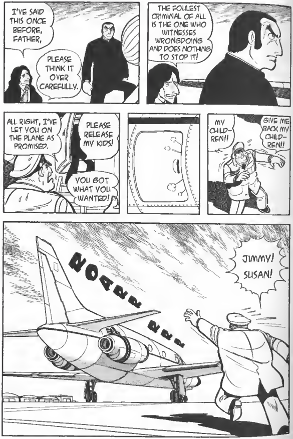

IT MIGHT NOT BE YOUR DAUGHTER! HE COULD JUST BE BLUFFING, SIR!
YES, THIS IS THE OFFICE OF EIKAKU NAKATA. I'M AFRAID HE'S INDISPOSED...
IT'S FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, SIR.
WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON, NAKATA?
COPIES OF CONFIDENTIAL PARTY DOCUMENTS WE ENTRUSTED TO YOU HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED TO THE OPPOSITION PARTIES!
YES... HELLO?
EVERY LAST ONE, INCLUDING THE MEMO ABOUT THE RIVERBED SALE AND THE K NATION MERGER DRAFT AGREEMENT!!
WHO THE HELL IS BEHIND THIS? WHO'S MANAGING YOUR AFFAIRS?
...
THE BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETS TOMORROW!
YOU WANT ALL OUR DIRTY LAUNDRY AIRED? WHO'S TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS?

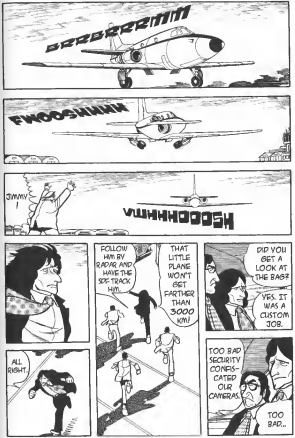

IN ANY CASE, GET DOWN HERE AT ONCE! WE'LL HEAR WHAT YOU HAVE TO SAY FOR YOURSELF!
...
K'CHAK!
CALL MICHIO.
I HAVE TO PUNISH MICHIO.
WE STILL DON'T KNOW WHERE HE IS, SIR.
I SAID TO CALL MICHIO!
I NEED HIS ADVICE!
UM...
I SEEM...
...TO BE FEELING SICK ...I'M GOING TO LIE DOWN.
SLUMP
SIR!

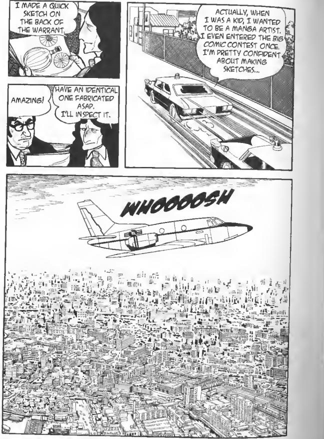

MEANWHILE, AT THE AIRSTRIP AT R AIR BASE
SKREEE
COMMANDER WALLACE, WOULD YOU PLEASE ESCORT YOUR CHILDREN ABOARD?
ARE WE GOING FOR AN AIRPLANE RIDE, DADDY?
HURRY UP, COMMANDER. AND DON'T TRY ANYTHING FUNNY. I'LL RIP OPEN THIS BAG AND YOU CAN DIE AS A FAMILY.
GET ON, KIDS...
TIME FOR US TO BOARD.
WELL, HELLO, THERE!

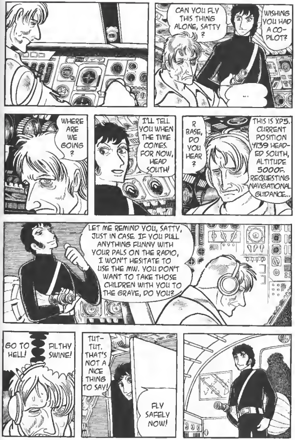

HELLO! PROSECUTOR MEGURO, WAS IT?
LONG TIME NO SEE, MR. YUKI—I MEAN, MR. NAKATA... I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU SINCE YOU LEFT THE BANK.
I HAVE A WARRANT HERE FOR YOUR ARREST. BUT SINCE THIS BASE IS EXTRA-TERRITORIAL, I'M AFRAID IT'S WORTHLESS.
WHAT A SHAME.
I HAD MY EYE ON YOU FROM THE START... I REGRET THAT I DIDN'T APPLY FOR A WARRANT A LITTLE BIT SOONER.
SPARE ME THE SOB STORY. YOU TRY MY PATIENCE.
EXCUSE US, WE'RE IN A HURRY.

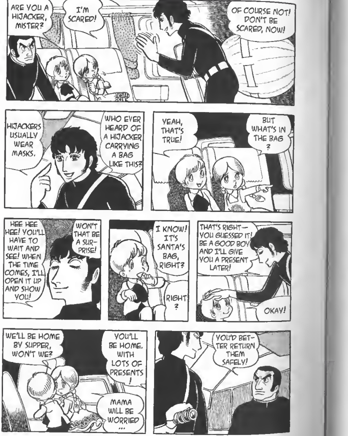

PLEASE, BE MY GUEST.
IT'S A LOAD OFF MY MIND. FINALLY THE END OF THE ROAD FOR YOU.
I'M AFRAID YOU'RE MISTAKEN, PROSECUTOR MEGURO.
MY WORK IS JUST BEGINNING. YOU SHOULD JOIN ME IN CELEBRATING MY NEW VENTURE!
OH, I'LL CELEBRATE, ALL RIGHT. ON A FOREIGN MILITARY BASE, I'M AFRAID I'M PERFECTLY POWERLESS. BUT AS SOON AS YOU LEAVE BASE, YOU'LL BE IN MY JURISDICTION.
YES, YES... AND YOU HAVE A CHANCE IN HELL OF ARRESTING ME?
OH, I CERTAINLY DO, MR. YUKI— I MEAN NAKATA. I'M AFRAID YOUR PLAN HAS A MAJOR FLAW.
I REFER TO THE FACT THAT YOU, TOO, ARE MADE OF FLESH.
ARREST ME IF YOU CAN. I'M TAKING THE MW WITH ME, AS YOU CAN SEE.
I'M PREPARED TO RELEASE THE GAS AND TAKE MY OWN LIFE AT ANY JUNCTURE. THAT DOESN'T FRIGHTEN YOU, PROSECUTOR?
OR PERHAPS THIS IS JUST SOUR GRAPES?
NEVER MIND THAT NOW. BON VOYAGE!

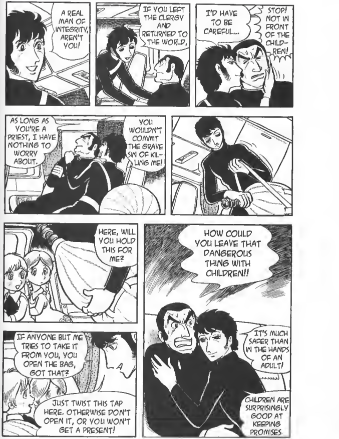

I'VE SAID THIS ONCE BEFORE, FATHER,
PLEASE THINK IT OVER CAREFULLY.
THE FOULEST CRIMINAL OF ALL IS THE ONE WHO WITNESSES WRONGDOING AND DOES NOTHING TO STOP IT!
ALL RIGHT, I'VE LET YOU ON THE PLANE AS PROMISED.
PLEASE RELEASE MY KIDS!
YOU GOT WHAT YOU WANTED!
MY CHILDREN!!
GIVE ME BACK MY CHILDREN!!
ROARRRRR
JIMMY! SUSAN!

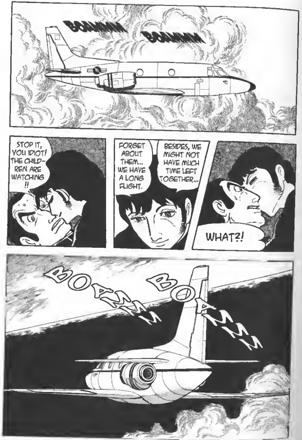

BRRBRRRMMM
FWOOSHHHH
JIMMY!
VWHHHOOOSH
ALL RIGHT.
FOLLOW HIM BY RADAR AND HAVE THE SDF TRACK HIM.
THAT LITTLE PLANE WON'T GET FARTHER THAN 3000 KM!
DID YOU GET A LOOK AT THE BAG?
YES. IT WAS A CUSTOM JOB.
TOO BAD SECURITY CONFISCATED OUR CAMERAS.
TOO BAD...


I MADE A QUICK SKETCH ON THE BACK OF THE WARRANT.
ACTUALLY, WHEN I WAS A KID, I WANTED TO BE A MANGA ARTIST. I EVEN ENTERED THE BIG COMIC CONTEST ONCE. I'M PRETTY CONFIDENT ABOUT MAKING SKETCHES...
AMAZING!
HAVE AN IDENTICAL ONE FABRICATED ASAP. I'LL INSPECT IT.
WHOOOOSH


CAN YOU FLY THIS THING ALONE, SATTY?
WISHING YOU HAD A CO-PILOT?
...
WHERE ARE WE GOING?
I'LL TELL YOU WHEN THE TIME COMES. FOR NOW, HEAD SOUTH!
R BASE, DO YOU HEAR?
THIS IS XP5. CURRENT POSITION 4139 HEADED SOUTH, ALTITUDE 5000F. REQUESTING NAVIGATIONAL GUIDANCE...
LET ME REMIND YOU, SATTY, JUST IN CASE. IF YOU PULL ANYTHING FUNNY WITH YOUR PALS ON THE RADIO, I WON'T HESITATE TO USE THE MW. YOU DON'T WANT TO TAKE THOSE CHILDREN WITH YOU TO THE GRAVE, DO YOU?
GO TO HELL!
FILTHY SWINE!
TUT-TUT. THAT'S NOT A NICE THING TO SAY!
FLY SAFELY NOW!

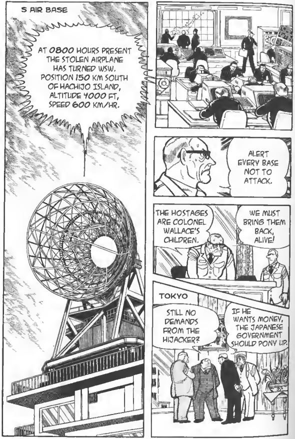

ARE YOU A HIJACKER, MISTER?
I'M SCARED!
OF COURSE NOT! DON'T BE SCARED, NOW!
HIJACKERS USUALLY WEAR MASKS.
WHO EVER HEARD OF A HIJACKER CARRYING A BAG LIKE THIS?
YEAH, THAT'S TRUE!
BUT WHAT'S IN THE BAG?
HEE HEE HEE! YOU'LL HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE! WHEN THE TIME COMES, I'LL OPEN IT UP AND SHOW YOU!
WON'T THAT BE A SURPRISE!
I KNOW! IT'S SANTA'S BAG, RIGHT?
THAT'S RIGHT—YOU GUESSED IT! BE A GOOD BOY AND I'LL GIVE YOU A PRESENT LATER!
RIGHT?
OKAY!
WE'LL BE HOME BY SUPPER, WON'T WE?
YOU'LL BE HOME. WITH LOTS OF PRESENTS!
MAMA WILL BE WORRIED...
YOU'D BETTER RETURN THEM SAFELY!

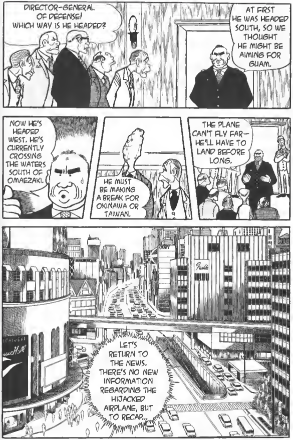

A REAL MAN OF INTEGRITY, AREN'T YOU!
IF YOU LEFT THE CLERGY AND RETURNED TO THE WORLD,
I'D HAVE TO BE CAREFUL...
STOP! NOT IN FRONT OF THE CHILDREN!
AS LONG AS YOU'RE A PRIEST, I HAVE NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.
YOU WOULDN'T COMMIT THE GRAVE SIN OF KILLING ME!
HERE, WILL YOU HOLD THIS FOR ME?
IF ANYONE BUT ME TRIES TO TAKE IT FROM YOU, YOU OPEN THE BAG, GOT THAT?
JUST TWIST THIS TAP HERE. OTHERWISE DON'T OPEN IT, OR YOU WON'T GET A PRESENT!
HOW COULD YOU LEAVE THAT DANGEROUS THING WITH CHILDREN!!
IT'S MUCH SAFER THAN IN THE HANDS OF AN ADULT!
CHILDREN ARE SURPRISINGLY GOOD AT KEEPING PROMISES.

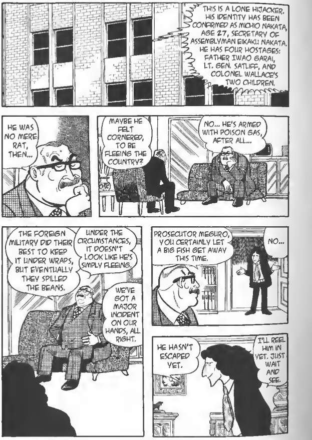

BOAMM
BOAMM
STOP IT, YOU IDIOT! THE CHILD-REN ARE WATCHING !!
FORGET ABOUT THEM... WE HAVE A LONG FLIGHT.
BESIDES, WE MIGHT NOT HAVE MUCH TIME LEFT TOGETHER...
WHAT?!
BOAMM
BOAMM

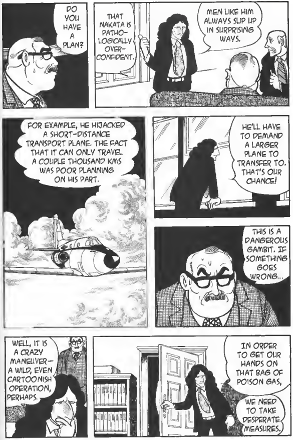
CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

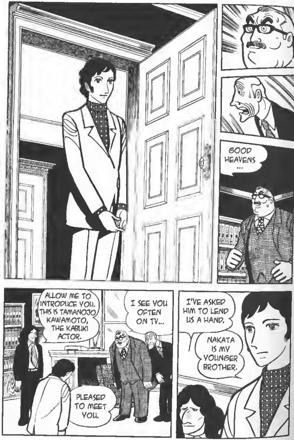
THE FINAL GAMBIT

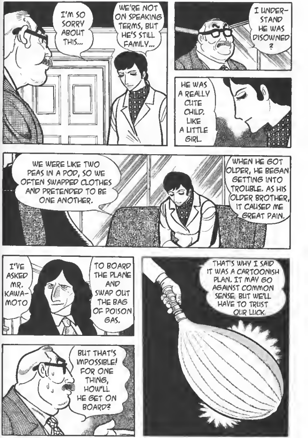

S AIR BASE
AT 0800 HOURS PRESENT THE STOLEN AIRPLANE HAS TURNED WSW. POSITION 150 KM SOUTH OF HACHIJO ISLAND, ALTITUDE 4000 FT, SPEED 600 KM/HR.
ALERT EVERY BASE NOT TO ATTACK.
THE HOSTAGES ARE COLONEL WALLACE'S CHILDREN.
WE MUST BRING THEM BACK, ALIVE!
TOKYO
STILL NO DEMANDS FROM THE HIJACKER?
IF HE WANTS MONEY, THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT SHOULD PONY UP.

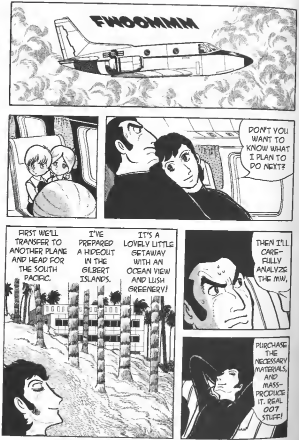

DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF DEFENSE! WHICH WAY IS HE HEADED?
AT FIRST HE WAS HEADED SOUTH, SO WE THOUGHT HE MIGHT BE AIMING FOR GUAM.
NOW HE'S HEADED WEST. HE'S CURRENTLY CROSSING THE WATERS SOUTH OF OMAEZAKI.
HE MUST BE MAKING A BREAK FOR OKINAWA OR TAIWAN.
THE PLANE CAN'T FLY FAR—HE'LL HAVE TO LAND BEFORE LONG.
LET'S RETURN TO THE NEWS. THERE'S NO NEW INFORMATION REGARDING THE HIJACKED AIRPLANE, BUT TO RECAP...

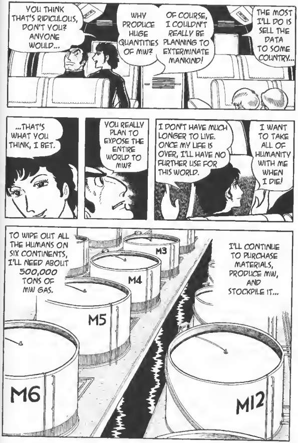

THIS IS A LONE HIJACKER. HIS IDENTITY HAS BEEN CONFIRMED AS MICHIO NAKATA, AGE 27, SECRETARY OF ASSEMBLYMAN EIKAKU NAKATA. HE HAS FOUR HOSTAGES: FATHER IWAO GARAI, LT. GEN. SATLIFF, AND COLONEL WALLACE'S TWO CHILDREN.
HE WAS NO MERE RAT, THEN...
MAYBE HE FELT CORNERED, TO BE FLEEING THE COUNTRY?
NO... HE'S ARMED WITH POISON GAS, AFTER ALL...
THE FOREIGN MILITARY DID THEIR BEST TO KEEP IT UNDER WRAPS, BUT EVENTUALLY THEY SPILLED THE BEANS.
UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE HE'S SIMPLY FLEEING.
WE'VE GOT A MAJOR INCIDENT ON OUR HANDS, ALL RIGHT.
PROSECUTOR MEGURO, YOU CERTAINLY LET A BIG FISH GET AWAY THIS TIME.
NO...
HE HASN'T ESCAPED YET.
I'LL REEL HIM IN YET. JUST WAIT AND SEE.

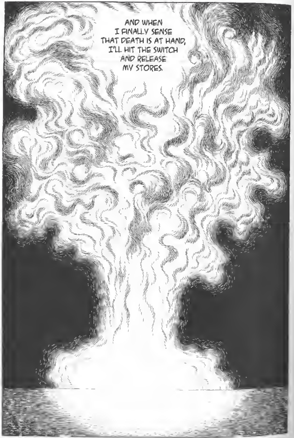

DO YOU HAVE A PLAN?
THAT NAKATA IS PATHOLOGICALLY OVERCONFIDENT.
MEN LIKE HIM ALWAYS SLIP UP IN SURPRISING WAYS.
FOR EXAMPLE, HE HIJACKED A SHORT-DISTANCE TRANSPORT PLANE. THE FACT THAT IT CAN ONLY TRAVEL A COUPLE THOUSAND KMS WAS POOR PLANNING ON HIS PART.
HE'LL HAVE TO DEMAND A LARGER PLANE TO TRANSFER TO. THAT'S OUR CHANCE!
THIS IS A DANGEROUS GAMBIT. IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG...
WELL, IT IS A CRAZY MANEUVER—A WILD, EVEN CARTOONISH OPERATION, PERHAPS.
IN ORDER TO GET OUR HANDS ON THAT BAG OF POISON GAS,
WE NEED TO TAKE DESPERATE MEASURES.

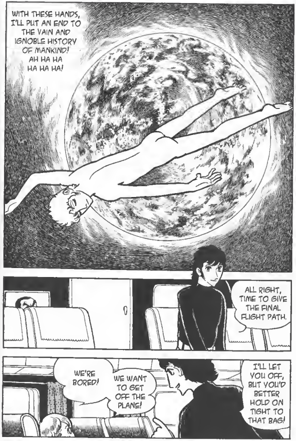

GOOD HEAVENS ...
ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE YOU. THIS IS TAMANOJO KAWAMOTO, THE KABUKI ACTOR.
I SEE YOU OFTEN ON TV...
PLEASED TO MEET YOU.
I'VE ASKED HIM TO LEND US A HAND.
NAKATA IS MY YOUNGER BROTHER.

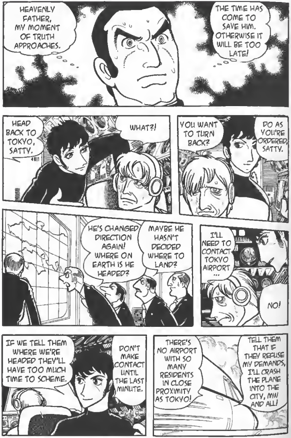

I'M SO SORRY ABOUT THIS...
WE'RE NOT ON SPEAKING TERMS, BUT HE'S STILL FAMILY...
I UNDERSTAND HE WAS DISOWNED?
HE WAS A REALLY CUTE CHILD. LIKE A LITTLE GIRL.
WE WERE LIKE TWO PEAS IN A POD, SO WE OFTEN SWAPPED CLOTHES AND PRETENDED TO BE ONE ANOTHER.
WHEN HE GOT OLDER, HE BEGAN GETTING INTO TROUBLE. AS HIS OLDER BROTHER, IT CAUSED ME GREAT PAIN.
I'VE ASKED MR. KAWAMOTO
TO BOARD THE PLANE AND SWAP OUT THE BAG OF POISON GAS.
BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! FOR ONE THING, HOW'LL HE GET ON BOARD?
THAT'S WHY I SAID IT WAS A CARTOONISH PLAN. IT MAY GO AGAINST COMMON SENSE, BUT WE'LL HAVE TO TRUST OUR LUCK.

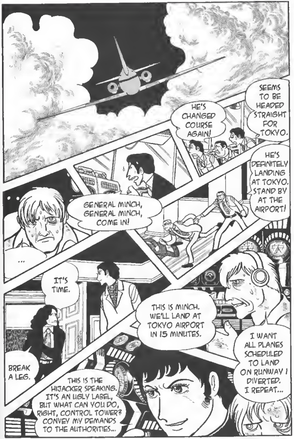

FWOOMMM
DON'T YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT I PLAN TO DO NEXT?
FIRST WE'LL TRANSFER TO ANOTHER PLANE AND HEAD FOR THE SOUTH PACIFIC.
I'VE PREPARED A HIDEOUT IN THE GILBERT ISLANDS.
IT'S A LOVELY LITTLE GETAWAY WITH AN OCEAN VIEW AND LUSH GREENERY!
THEN I'LL CAREFULLY ANALYZE THE MW,
PURCHASE THE NECESSARY MATERIALS, AND MASS-PRODUCE IT. REAL 007 STUFF!

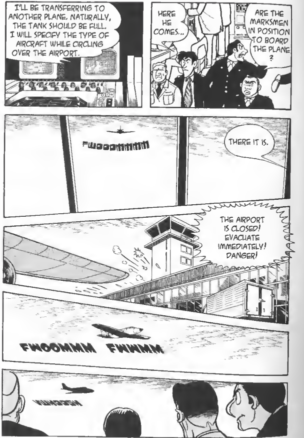

YOU THINK THAT'S RIDICULOUS, DON'T YOU? ANYONE WOULD...
WHY PRODUCE HUGE QUANTITIES OF MW?
OF COURSE, I COULDN'T REALLY BE PLANNING TO EXTERMINATE MANKIND!
THE MOST I'LL DO IS SELL THE DATA TO SOME COUNTRY...
...THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK, I BET.
YOU REALLY PLAN TO EXPOSE THE ENTIRE WORLD TO MW?
I DON'T HAVE MUCH LONGER TO LIVE. ONCE MY LIFE IS OVER, I'LL HAVE NO FURTHER USE FOR THIS WORLD.
I WANT TO TAKE ALL OF HUMANITY WITH ME WHEN I DIE!
TO WIPE OUT ALL THE HUMANS ON SIX CONTINENTS, I'LL NEED ABOUT 500,000 TONS OF MW GAS.
I'LL CONTINUE TO PURCHASE MATERIALS, PRODUCE MW, AND STOCKPILE IT...
M3
M4
M5
M6
M12

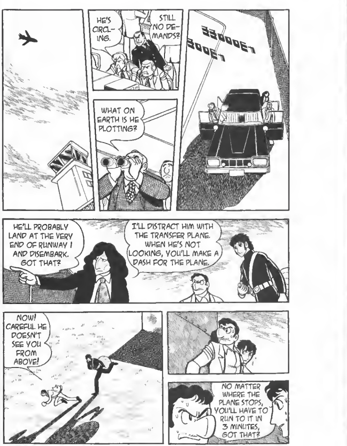

AND WHEN I FINALLY SENSE THAT DEATH IS AT HAND, I'LL HIT THE SWITCH AND RELEASE MY STORES.

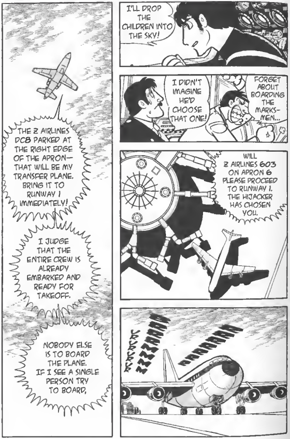

WITH THESE HANDS, I'LL PUT AN END TO THE VAIN AND IGNOBLE HISTORY OF MANKIND! AH HA HA HA HA HA!
ALL RIGHT, TIME TO GIVE THE FINAL FLIGHT PATH.
WE'RE BORED!
WE WANT TO GET OFF THE PLANE!
I'LL LET YOU OFF, BUT YOU'D BETTER HOLD ON TIGHT TO THAT BAG!

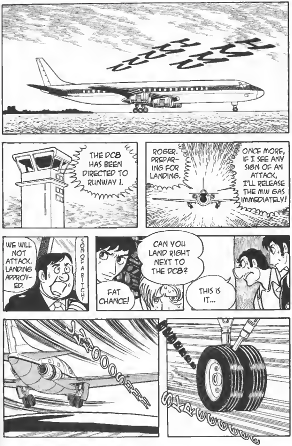

HEAVENLY FATHER, MY MOMENT OF TRUTH APPROACHES.
THE TIME HAS COME TO SAVE HIM. OTHERWISE IT WILL BE TOO LATE!
HEAD BACK TO TOKYO, SATTY.
WHAT?!
YOU WANT TO TURN BACK?
DO AS YOU'RE ORDERED, SATTY.
HE'S CHANGED DIRECTION AGAIN! WHERE ON EARTH IS HE HEADED?
MAYBE HE HASN'T DECIDED WHERE TO LAND?
I'LL NEED TO CONTACT TOKYO AIRPORT ...
NO!
IF WE TELL THEM WHERE WE'RE HEADED THEY'LL HAVE TOO MUCH TIME TO SCHEME.
DON'T MAKE CONTACT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE.
THERE'S NO AIRPORT WITH SO MANY RESIDENTS IN CLOSE PROXIMITY AS TOKYO!
TELL THEM THAT IF THEY REFUSE MY DEMANDS, I'LL CRASH THE PLANE INTO THE CITY, MW AND ALL!

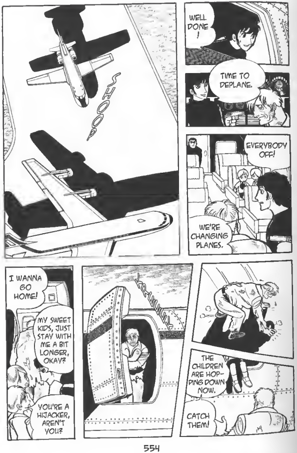

HE'S CHANGED COURSE AGAIN!
SEEMS TO BE HEADED STRAIGHT FOR TOKYO.
HE'S DEFINITELY LANDING AT TOKYO. STAND BY AT THE AIRPORT!
GENERAL MINCH, GENERAL MINCH, COME IN!
...
IT'S TIME.
BREAK A LEG.
THIS IS MINCH. WE'LL LAND AT TOKYO AIRPORT IN 15 MINUTES.
I WANT ALL PLANES SCHEDULED TO LAND ON RUNWAY 1 DIVERTED. I REPEAT...
THIS IS THE HIJACKER SPEAKING. IT'S AN UGLY LABEL, BUT WHAT CAN YOU DO, RIGHT, CONTROL TOWER? CONVEY MY DEMANDS TO THE AUTHORITIES...

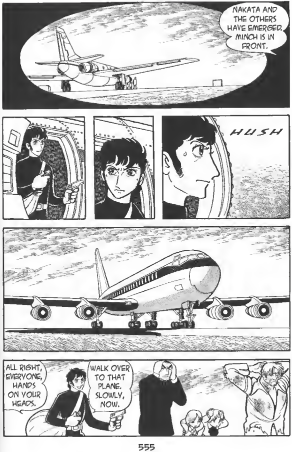

I'LL BE TRANSFERRING TO ANOTHER PLANE. NATURALLY, THE TANK SHOULD BE FULL. I WILL SPECIFY THE TYPE OF AIRCRAFT WHILE CIRCLING OVER THE AIRPORT.
HERE HE COMES...
ARE THE MARKSMEN IN POSITION TO BOARD THE PLANE?
FWOOOMMMMM
THERE IT IS.
THE AIRPORT IS CLOSED! EVACUATE IMMEDIATELY! DANGER!
FWOOMMM FWMMM
WHOOSH

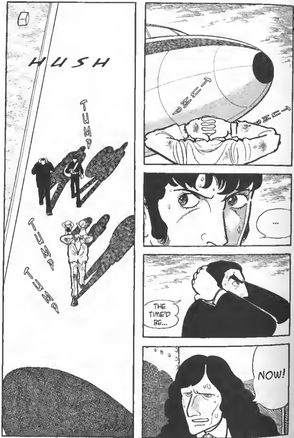

HE'S CIRCLING.
STILL NO DEMANDS?
WHAT ON EARTH IS HE PLOTTING?
HE'LL PROBABLY LAND AT THE VERY END OF RUNWAY 1 AND DISEMBARK. GOT THAT?
I'LL DISTRACT HIM WITH THE TRANSFER PLANE. WHEN HE'S NOT LOOKING, YOU'LL MAKE A DASH FOR THE PLANE.
NOW! CAREFUL HE DOESN'T SEE YOU FROM ABOVE!
NO MATTER WHERE THE PLANE STOPS, YOU'LL HAVE TO RUN TO IT IN 3 MINUTES, GOT THAT?

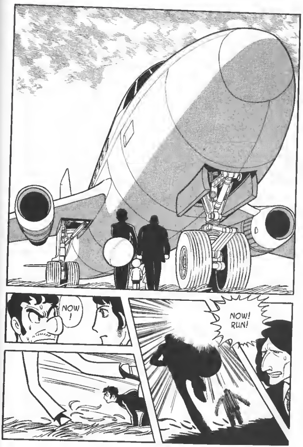

THE Z AIRLINES DC8 PARKED AT THE RIGHT EDGE OF THE APRON—THAT WILL BE MY TRANSFER PLANE. BRING IT TO RUNWAY 1 IMMEDIATELY!
I JUDGE THAT THE ENTIRE CREW IS ALREADY EMBARKED AND READY FOR TAKEOFF.
NOBODY ELSE IS TO BOARD THE PLANE. IF I SEE A SINGLE PERSON TRY TO BOARD,
I'LL DROP THE CHILDREN INTO THE SKY!
I DIDN'T IMAGINE HE'D CHOOSE THAT ONE!
FORGET ABOUT BOARDING THE MARKSMEN...
WILL Z AIRLINES 603 ON APRON 6 PLEASE PROCEED TO RUNWAY 1. THE HIJACKER HAS CHOSEN YOU.

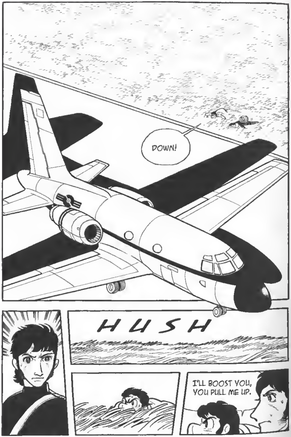

THE DC8 HAS BEEN DIRECTED TO RUNWAY 1.
ROGER. PREPARING FOR LANDING.
ONCE MORE, IF I SEE ANY SIGN OF AN ATTACK, I'LL RELEASE THE MW GAS IMMEDIATELY!
WE WILL NOT ATTACK. LANDING APPROVED.
SON OF A BITCH
CAN YOU LAND RIGHT NEXT TO THE DC8?
FAT CHANCE!
THIS IS IT...

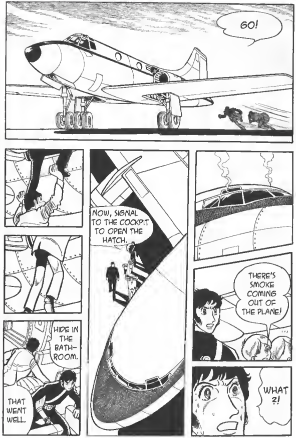

SHOOP
WELL DONE!
TIME TO DEPLANE.
EVERYBODY OFF!
WE'RE CHANGING PLANES.
I WANNA GO HOME!
MY SWEET KIDS, JUST STAY WITH ME A BIT LONGER, OKAY?
YOU'RE A HIJACKER, AREN'T YOU?
KA-CHUNK
THE CHILDREN ARE HOPPING DOWN NOW.
CATCH THEM!

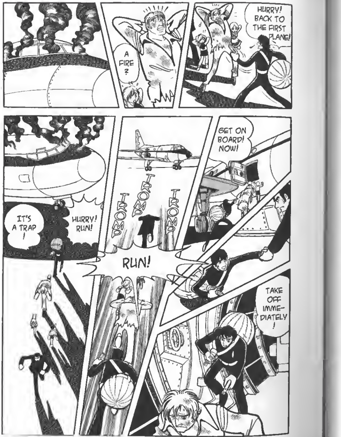

NAKATA AND THE OTHERS HAVE EMERGED. MINCH IS IN FRONT.
HUSH
ALL RIGHT, EVERYONE, HANDS ON YOUR HEADS.
WALK OVER TO THAT PLANE. SLOWLY, NOW.

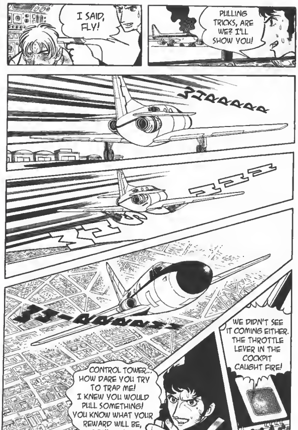

HUSH
TUMP
TUMP
TUMP
TUMP
TUMP
...
THE TIME'D BE...
NOW!

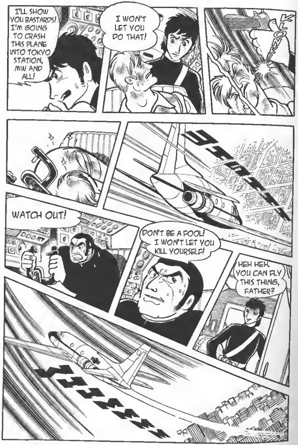

NOW !
NOW! RUN!

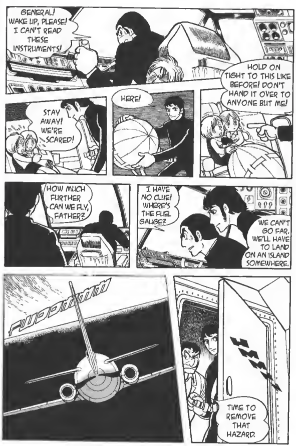

DOWN!
HUSH
I'LL BOOST YOU, YOU PULL ME UP.

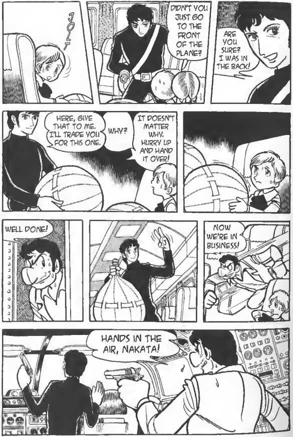

GO!
HIDE IN THE BATHROOM.
THAT WENT WELL.
NOW, SIGNAL TO THE COCKPIT TO OPEN THE HATCH.
THERE'S SMOKE COMING OUT OF THE PLANE!
WHAT?!

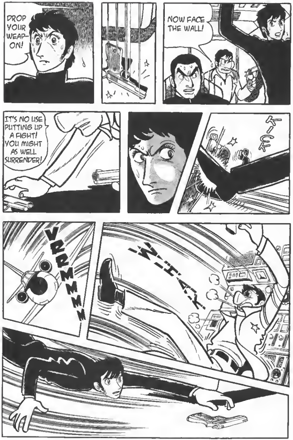

A FIRE?
HURRY! BACK TO THE FIRST PLANE!
IT'S A TRAP!
HURRY! RUN!
TROMP TROMP TROMP
GET ON BOARD! NOW!
RUN!
TAKE OFF IMME-DIATELY!

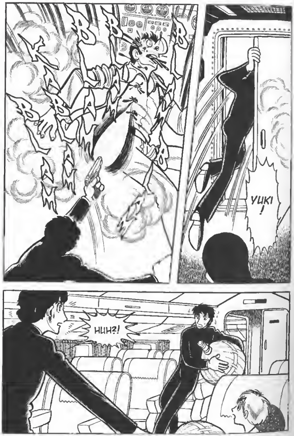

I SAID, FLY!
PULLING TRICKS, ARE WE? I'LL SHOW YOU!
WE DIDN'T SEE IT COMING EITHER. THE THROTTLE LEVER IN THE COCKPIT CAUGHT FIRE!
CONTROL TOWER... HOW DARE YOU TRY TO TRAP ME! I KNEW YOU WOULD PULL SOMETHING! YOU KNOW WHAT YOUR REWARD WILL BE, DON'T YOU?

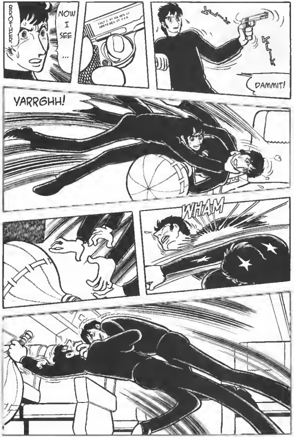

I'LL SHOW YOU BASTARDS! I'M GOING TO CRASH THIS PLANE INTO TOKYO STATION, MW AND ALL!
I WON'T LET YOU DO THAT!
KLONK!
WATCH OUT!
DON'T BE A FOOL! I WON'T LET YOU KILL YOURSELF!
HEH HEH. YOU CAN FLY THIS THING, FATHER?

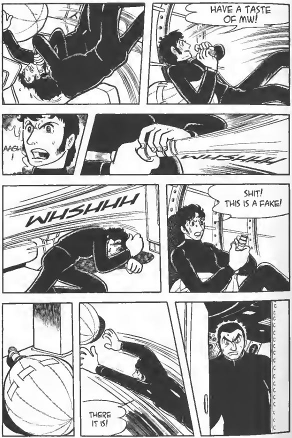

GENERAL! WAKE UP, PLEASE! I CAN'T READ THESE INSTRUMENTS!
HOLD ON TIGHT TO THIS LIKE BEFORE! DON'T HAND IT OVER TO ANYONE BUT ME!
STAY AWAY! WE'RE SCARED!
HERE!
HOW MUCH FURTHER CAN WE FLY, FATHER?
I HAVE NO CLUE! WHERE'S THE FUEL GAUGE?
WE CAN'T GO FAR. WE'LL HAVE TO LAND ON AN ISLAND SOMEWHERE.
TIME TO REMOVE THAT HAZARD.

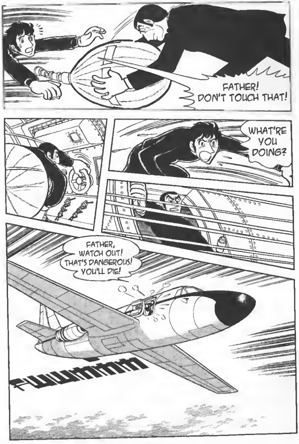

JOLT
DIDN'T YOU JUST GO TO THE FRONT OF THE PLANE?
ARE YOU SURE? I WAS IN THE BACK!
HERE, GIVE THAT TO ME. I'LL TRADE YOU FOR THIS ONE.
WHY?
IT DOESN'T MATTER WHY. HURRY UP AND HAND IT OVER!
WELL DONE!
NOW WE'RE IN BUSINESS!
HANDS IN THE AIR, NAKATA!

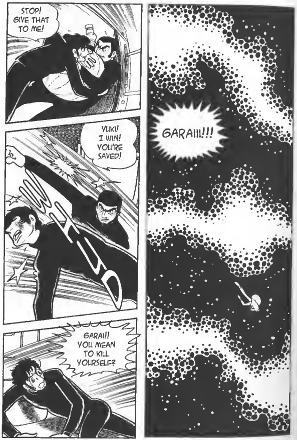

DROP YOUR WEAP-ON!
NOW FACE THE WALL!
IT'S NO USE PUTTING UP A FIGHT! YOU MIGHT AS WELL SURRENDER!
KICK
VRRMMMM
WHACK

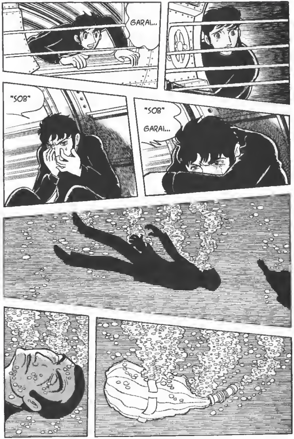

YUKI!
B B B
KABLAM
BLAM
BLAM
HUH?!

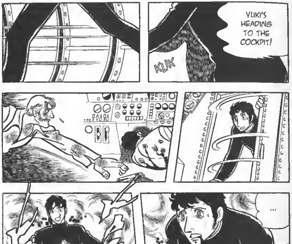

KLIK
DAMMIT!
NOW I SEE ...
BROTHER
YARRGHH!
WHAM

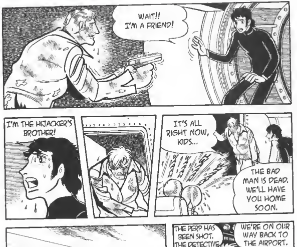

HAVE A TASTE OF MW!
AAGH!
WHSHHH
WHSHHH
SHIT! THIS IS A FAKE!
THERE IT IS!

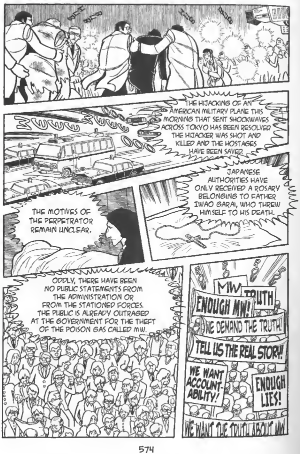

FATHER! DON'T TOUCH THAT!
WHAT'RE YOU DOING?
FATHER, WATCH OUT! THAT'S DANGEROUS! YOU'LL DIE!
FWWMMM

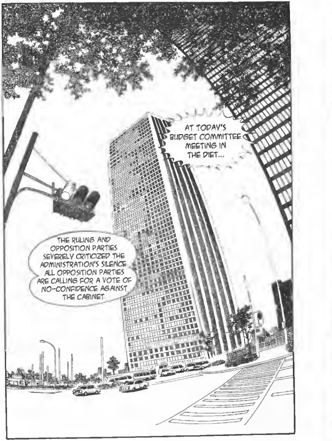

STOP! GIVE THAT TO ME!
YUKI! I WIN! YOU'RE SAVED!
GARAI!! YOU MEAN TO KILL YOURSELF?
GARAIII!!!

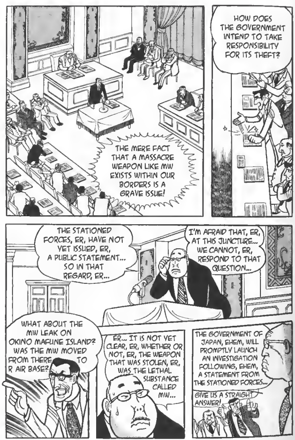

GARAI...
"SOB"
"SOB" GARAI...

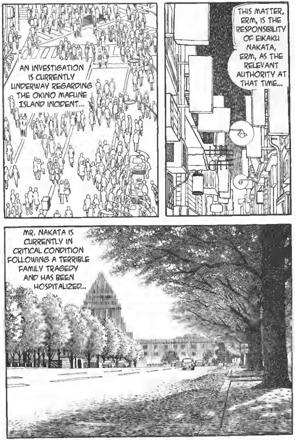

KLIK
YUKI'S HEADING TO THE COCKPIT!
...

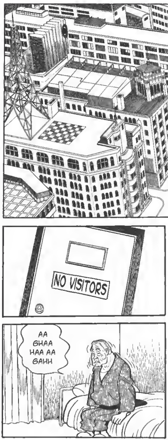

WAIT!! I'M A FRIEND!
I'M THE HIJACKER'S BROTHER!
IT'S ALL RIGHT NOW, KIDS...
THE BAD MAN IS DEAD. WE'LL HAVE YOU HOME SOON.
FUUMMMM
THE PERP HAS BEEN SHOT. THE DETECTIVE AND PRIEST ARE DEAD, TOO.
WE'RE ON OUR WAY BACK TO THE AIRPORT. PLEASE HAVE A RELIEF SQUAD STANDING BY!

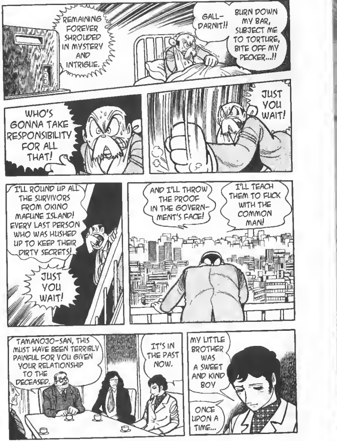

THE HIJACKING OF AN AMERICAN MILITARY PLANE THIS MORNING THAT SENT SHOCKWAVES ACROSS TOKYO HAS BEEN RESOLVED. THE HIJACKER WAS SHOT AND KILLED AND THE HOSTAGES HAVE BEEN SAVED.
JAPANESE AUTHORITIES HAVE ONLY RECEIVED A ROSARY BELONGING TO FATHER IWAO GARAI, WHO THREW HIMSELF TO HIS DEATH.
THE MOTIVES OF THE PERPETRATOR REMAIN UNCLEAR.
ODDLY, THERE HAVE BEEN NO PUBLIC STATEMENTS FROM THE ADMINISTRATION OR FROM THE STATIONED FORCES. THE PUBLIC IS ALREADY OUTRAGED AT THE GOVERNMENT FOR THE THEFT OF THE POISON GAS CALLED MW.
MW
TRUTH
ENOUGH MW!
WE DEMAND THE TRUTH!
TELL US THE REAL STORY!
WE WANT ACCOUNTABILITY!
ENOUGH LIES!
WE WANT THE TRUTH ABOUT MW

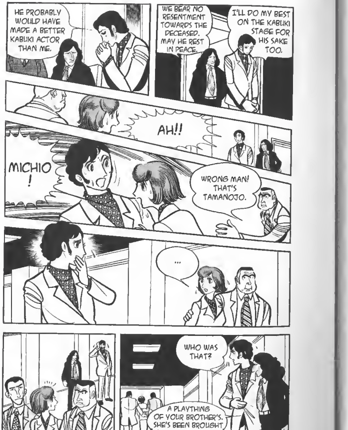

AT TODAY'S BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING IN THE DIET...
THE RULING AND OPPOSITION PARTIES SEVERELY CRITICIZED THE ADMINISTRATION'S SILENCE. ALL OPPOSITION PARTIES ARE CALLING FOR A VOTE OF NO-CONFIDENCE AGAINST THE CABINET.

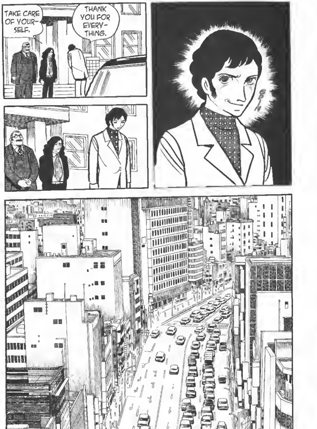

THE MERE FACT THAT A MASSACRE WEAPON LIKE MW EXISTS WITHIN OUR BORDERS IS A GRAVE ISSUE!
HOW DOES THE GOVERNMENT INTEND TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ITS THEFT?
THE STATIONED FORCES, ER, HAVE NOT YET ISSUED, ER, A PUBLIC STATEMENT... SO IN THAT REGARD, ER...
I'M AFRAID THAT, ER, AT THIS JUNCTURE... WE CANNOT, ER, RESPOND TO THAT QUESTION...
WHAT ABOUT THE MW LEAK ON OKINO MAFUNE ISLAND? WAS THE MW MOVED FROM THERE TO R AIR BASE?
ER... IT IS NOT YET CLEAR, ER, WHETHER OR NOT, ER, THE WEAPON THAT WAS STOLEN, ER, WAS THE LETHAL SUBSTANCE CALLED MW...
THE GOVERNMENT OF JAPAN, EHEM, WILL PROMPTLY LAUNCH AN INVESTIGATION FOLLOWING, EHEM, A STATEMENT FROM THE STATIONED FORCES...
GIVE US A STRAIGHT ANSWER!

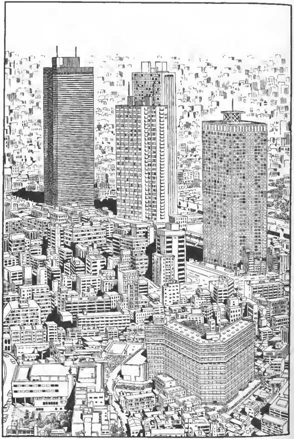

AN INVESTIGATION IS CURRENTLY UNDERWAY REGARDING THE OKINO MAFUNE ISLAND INCIDENT...
THIS MATTER, ERM, IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EIKAKU NAKATA, ERM, AS THE RELEVANT AUTHORITY AT THAT TIME...
MR. NAKATA IS CURRENTLY IN CRITICAL CONDITION FOLLOWING A TERRIBLE FAMILY TRAGEDY AND HAS BEEN HOSPITALIZED...


ACCORDING TO HIS DOCTOR, MR. NAKATA IS SUFFERING FROM ADVANCED ENCEPHALOMALACIA AND IS UNABLE TO RESPOND TO QUESTIONS FOR THE TIME BEING.
NO VISITORS
AA GHAA HAA AA GAHH
EIKAKU NAKATA, THE CENTRAL FIGURE TARGETED BY THE MW INVESTIGATION, IS DETERIORATING RAPIDLY.
AS A RESULT, MORE AND MORE PEOPLE ARE CONCERNED THAT THE TRUE FACTS OF THE INCIDENT MAY NEVER BE CLARIFIED...
THE HELL YOU SAY!!


REMAINING FOREVER SHROUDED IN MYSTERY AND INTRIGUE.
GALL-DARNIT!!
BURN DOWN MY BAR, SUBJECT ME TO TORTURE, BITE OFF MY PECKER...!!
WHO'S GONNA TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALL THAT!
JUST YOU WAIT!
I'LL ROUND UP ALL THE SURVIVORS FROM OKINO MAFUNE ISLAND! EVERY LAST PERSON WHO WAS HUSHED UP TO KEEP THEIR DIRTY SECRETS!
JUST YOU WAIT!
AND I'LL THROW THE PROOF IN THE GOVERNMENT'S FACE!
I'LL TEACH THEM TO FUCK WITH THE COMMON MAN!
TAMANOJO-SAN, THIS MUST HAVE BEEN TERRIBLY PAINFUL FOR YOU GIVEN YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE DECEASED.
IT'S IN THE PAST NOW.
MY LITTLE BROTHER WAS A SWEET AND KIND BOY
ONCE UPON A TIME...


HE PROBABLY WOULD HAVE MADE A BETTER KABUKI ACTOR THAN ME.
WE BEAR NO RESENTMENT TOWARDS THE DECEASED. MAY HE REST IN PEACE.
I'LL DO MY BEST ON THE KABUKI STAGE FOR HIS SAKE TOO.
AH!!
MICHIO!
WRONG MAN! THAT'S TAMANOJO.
...
WHO WAS THAT?
A PLAYTHING OF YOUR BROTHER'S. SHE'S BEEN BROUGHT IN FOR QUESTIONING.


TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF.
THANK YOU FOR EVERYTHING.
SHIN



THE END